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<b>Author</b>	Allen, Robert Michael
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**MALOTA - AN URBAN SLUM COMPOUND:**  
**AN ASPECT OF URBANIZATION IN ZAMBIA**

**ROBERT MICHAEL ALLEN**

**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**University of Edinburgh**  
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## ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of towns in recent decades in Africa has posed problems of both an academic and a political nature. In this study two specific problems associated with the process of urbanization - housing needs and political participation - provide the focus for a study of change in Livingstone, Zambia which was carried out in 1970/1971. Malota, the town's oldest housing area, has over the last two decades come to be seen as a squatter area and there have been continual demands for its demolition. It is thought by many people in the town to be a separate community; marginal in social, economic, and political terms and resistant to change. However, the analysis of data from a variety of sources over a twenty-year period shows that there have been major changes in the compound's social composition, particularly in terms of an increasing social and economic heterogeneity. It is evident that the compound is, and always has been, an integral part of the urban system.

Malota is also regarded as politically marginal with general tendencies to conservatism and traditionalism, and with an exaggerated emphasis on rural origins and values. A discussion of two particular institutions - tribal 'elders' and the local-level leadership of the ruling political party - suggests that this belief is also inaccurate. Viewed within the historical development of Zambian urban politics, the contemporary dominance of these two institutions by specific ethnic groups can be

seen as the consequence of a series of factors relating to the distribution of resources in the urban sector. As a result, it is more appropriate to view the relationship between tribe and political participation in terms of the intervening variable of socio-economic status.

Many of Malota's supposed characteristics cannot be supported by fact. Though it is undoubtedly a slum, it has been a crucial factor in the town's development, providing the flexibility needed in periods of rapid urban growth and a 'legal' alternative to the squatter areas that surround so many African towns and cities.

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Robert M. Allen  
Department of Sociology  
Ahmadu Bello University  
Zaria, Nigeria.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1:1 The Urban Slum

Modern African states have encountered many problems attendant upon the responsibilities of independence. Those who achieve power must take over, for example, the day-to-day role of providing jobs, housing, and education. The problems that this presents are exaggerated by the fact that independence is seen by many as a major breakthrough at which exploitation will cease and a higher standard of living will become the prerogative of all members of society. Such promises will almost certainly have been stressed by the politicians who were responsible for bringing about independence. In the years after independence, many people arrive in the towns and cities hoping to participate in this new prosperity. Few newly independent states can cope easily with this insurgence and problems of housing and unemployment get steadily, in some cases rapidly, worse.

One of the most visible symbols of such problems are the slums and 'squatter' areas that often surround the larger cities. Bates comments that: "As any visitor



to Zambia over the last several years would surely have noticed, shantytowns have burgeoned around the major urban centers."<sup>1</sup> The term 'shantytown' can cover a number of phenomena - legal slum, unauthorised housing area, or squatter settlement - for it refers primarily to the physical layout, construction, and appearance of a housing area rather than to any social or sociological characteristics. But they have one thing in common in that they are taken by administrators, planners, and politicians (as well as many other urban-dwellers) to constitute a 'problem' needing a solution. Generally speaking, such areas are believed to be repositories of all that is bad in urban life. They are thought to be focal points for crime and delinquency, dirt and disease, chaos and disorder. They are not seen as an integral part of the urban environment but something that is uninvited, unnecessary, and above all, unfortunate. The people who live there are, more often than not, believed to be unemployed 'loafers' who would be better off back in their rural villages.

This then is the general image of Africa's urban slums. It is only recently that observers have tried to look further and find the "intrinsic logic of the process of unplanned urban settlement."<sup>2</sup> Such work tries to avoid a stereotype of slum settlements that assumes them to be socially homogeneous and marginal, and views their

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<sup>1</sup> Bates (1976:181)

<sup>2</sup> Brett (1974:172)

populations as 'out-groups' which are excluded from the conventional housing sector.<sup>1</sup> One of the inadequacies of conventional research has been the tendency to view the legal component (primarily the title to land) and the material component (the haphazard and non-standardised nature of building) as major determinants which differentiate slums from the overall process of urban settlement. These undeniable differences have subsequently led many observers to make the assumption (in line with public opinion) that slum-dwellers are a separate type of urban person with different social, economic, and political characteristics. Little attempt has been made to use the needs and motives of the urban settler as a basis for the differentiation of the settlement process.

The squatter has become the focus of much attention in recent years. Squatter areas are conventionally distinguished from other housing areas by reference to the populations' lack of legal title to the land on which their housing is situated. 40% of Zambia's urban population is thought to be living in squatter areas, which are regarded primarily as a response to post-independence housing shortages that have arisen as a result of the rapid growth of towns. They are also believed to house concentrations of first-time migrants

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<sup>1</sup> Much of this work originated in Latin America and owes a great deal to the ideas of the architect John Turner. See, for example, Turner (1969) in Breese (1969); Turner and Mangin (1968) in Oliver (1970); Leeds (1969); Brett (1974).

(often unmarried or unaccompanied) who are looking for work. For this reason it is believed that they contribute little to the well-being of a town. Quite the opposite, they are a substantial drain on limited resources and, ultimately, a threat to the security of the wider urban population.

However, recent research is beginning to show that many of these beliefs are inaccurate and that it is possible to view the squatter or slum-dweller from a very different perspective. As a result it is argued increasingly that "squatter areas rather than constituting a 'problem' play an essential part in the process of urbanisation",<sup>1</sup> and that it is not their illegality, but the "uncontrolled and seemingly uncontrollable urban expansion" that they represent, that makes them of such concern to outsiders.<sup>2</sup> The existence of slums dramatically highlights the inability of governments to change quickly enough, and the squatter or slum-dweller has become the unfortunate symbol of the gap between the theory and practice of development and modernisation. Slums are regarded as highly undesirable, not simply because of the effect that they have on those who populate them, but because they contradict the promises and expectations of political change.

The problem then is not one of slums per se, but a more general one involving the way in which various

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<sup>1</sup> Van Velsen (1975:305)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 297



groups of people cope with the effects of rapid urbanization. Nor is it just a recent problem. Despite the belief that the colonial administration kept a tight hold on housing matters, the growth (frequently rapid) of towns throughout the whole of this century has meant that unauthorised housing areas and squatters have been a permanent feature of Zambia's towns. The population of any urban area is widely varied in terms of various factors such as background, education, level of income, and so on. As a result, the town must cater for a wide range of tastes, needs, resources, and ambitions. As we shall see in later chapters, this is frequently not possible. Instead the population must develop its own framework within which this can be done. This may take a variety of forms from overcrowding to squatter settlement. Though this may be a source of embarrassment to governments and municipal authorities, it is frequently an essential adaptation on the part of the urban population without which the town could not function properly. This is the built-in contradiction, for the areas are both unacceptable and unavoidable.

This study focuses on a particular housing situation in Livingstone, Zambia where the population has a legal right to tenure, but which is regarded by the administration and the rest of the town as a squatter compound.<sup>1</sup> It is widely believed that the compound, known

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'compound' is used in the Central and Southern African sense to refer to a housing area, location, or estate.

as MALOTA, degrades the status of the town and prevents it from becoming a modern city. Consequently, there have been continuing demands for its demolition. Perhaps because of this, the compound is often seen as a totally separate community within the town and to many people it is 'a village in the town'. On the other hand, it was probably the first compound to be built in Northern Rhodesia by the incoming settlers and it has survived in much the same form for over 60 years. Its population is thought to contain some of the town's original inhabitants and it is known that there are a large number of long-term residents. In this sense it is very definitely urban. Nor is it isolated from the rest of Livingstone. Many of the compound's inhabitants work elsewhere in the town, and most of the facilities for leisure, worship and trade are outside the compound's boundaries. As a result, very few people live totally within its confines. Despite its history and appearance, therefore, I have not assumed that Malota is a community in any sociological sense, but have preferred to follow Leeds in viewing it as a 'locality' - a sensorily distinct locus of settlement which comprises a node of interactions.<sup>1</sup> If the population of Malota should comprise "a big family", or "feel a spirit of oneness" as a Livingstone Municipal Council report recently suggested,<sup>2</sup> then this must be demonstrated.

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<sup>1</sup> Leeds (1973:20)

<sup>2</sup> Municipal Council of Livingstone (1971)



Malota does not fit easily into any of the conventional categories of urban housing. It is an official municipal housing area which bears great similarities to the 'site-and-service' schemes of the post-independence era and also the colonial 'townships' of the 1940s and 1950s. Yet at the same time it is believed to be a squatter compound. It has in its long history experienced a number of changes as the housing policies and resources of the various administrations have changed. Similarly, it has been influenced by the varying changes of fortune that the town has experienced. In recent years it has virtually doubled its population. By studying the development of the compound and its population throughout its history, I hope to be able to explore the more general patterns of urban growth throughout the country over a period of time. A housing area and its population are not isolated, and the nature (indeed the very existence) of Malota is necessarily related to a whole range of factors at different levels.

## 1:2 Urbanization and Migration in Central Africa

The study of urban areas in Central and Southern Africa has been primarily the study of the growth and development of towns, more specifically the process of urbanization. This was inevitable in a region where at the beginning of the century there were no towns as such, and where subsequent growth has been, by any standards,

unusual. The study of this "very complex" and "elusive"<sup>1</sup> phenomenon has been the focus of much debate. The concept of 'urbanization' is intended to have some sort of universal applicability and its breadth means that it encompasses, subsumes, or is connected with, a number of other concepts such as 'Westernization', industrialization, stabilization and 'detrribalization'.<sup>2</sup> The interdisciplinary nature of the concept (and the fact that it has often been used outside of the social sciences) means that it has too often been used as a catch-all phrase for virtually all urban social phenomena.

Many of the difficulties arise from the initial problem of defining the exact meaning of 'urban'. The wide range of available definitions has led some writers to suggest that a common-sense approach be employed. Southall, however, has argued that "it is doubtful whether such an amateur view is adequate when anthropologists attempt, as they must, to work towards valid generalizations over wide ranges of time and space."<sup>3</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, it is argued that the terms 'town' and 'townsman' are, structurally, virtually meaningless because they must be defined "by reference to a particular town and to a particular regional context."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adams (1972:45)

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1967) in Breese (1969:247)

<sup>3</sup> Southall (1973:5)

<sup>4</sup> Parkin (1969:187)

There have also been a number of attempts to express it in quantitative terms. Knoop, for example, claims that:

For Wirth, and a growing number of sociologists following his lead, the formal criteria of a scientific definition of the urban community are satisfactorily met by a definition in terms of its demographic uniqueness in terms of three major demographic variables: absolute numbers of population in a permanently settled area, density of the settlement, and heterogeneity of the population. These in turn generate "urbanism", a mode of existence or way of life characteristic of the urban community.<sup>1</sup>

A series of attempts have been made to provide simple, quantitative measures based on arbitrary numerical dichotomies of urban and rural populations. However, they are inevitably restricted if used by themselves and many social scientists, certainly most social anthropologists, would argue that other social, economic and cultural factors are the essential dimensions of the process of urbanization. Southall argues that any definition of urban life "must essentially concentrate upon the high spatial density of social interactions, rather than the mere physical density of bodies or buildings."<sup>2</sup> He, like Plotnicov<sup>3</sup>, believes that it should be the objective of anthropologists to deal with the qualitative aspects of the urbanization process. Little attempts to provide a more operational framework when he says that he "deliberately substituted some such

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<sup>1</sup> Knoop (1971b:11)

<sup>2</sup> Southall (1973:6)

<sup>3</sup> Plotnicov (1969:272)



phrase as 'urban population growth' for 'urbanization' except where questions of social process are specifically involved."<sup>1</sup>

In these terms, urbanization is the specifically sociological aspect of the process of urban development and growth. What is not necessarily made clear, however, is the level of analysis that is involved. There is frequently no clear distinction between the urbanization of a continent, a nation-state, a village, or an individual (or group of individuals). Thus we can talk about how 'Africa has become rapidly urbanized' or how a particular individual has become 'permanently urbanized'. Though these are undoubtedly connected, analytically they involve the discussion of quite different combinations of factors. The result of this has been, according to Banton, the development of a broad contrast between two general schools of thought. One, exemplified by much of the research done on the Zambian Copperbelt, "focuses upon interpersonal relations and tries to build upwards to a model of the society"; the other, which he terms the 'Durkheim-Southall' approach "works downward from a macrosociological starting point".<sup>2</sup> It is, Southall has claimed more recently, the specific job of urban anthropologists to bridge this gap between the microsocial and macrosocial levels.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Little (1974:5)

<sup>2</sup> Banton (1973:48)

<sup>3</sup> Southall (1973:7)

It is clear that the study of urban behaviour is surrounded by a variety of debates involving a number of oppositions - urban/rural, demographic/sociological, microsocial/macrosocial, institution/individual, and so on. All have been abstracted from the available data in order to make analysis and the construction of generalised propositions feasible. Though a necessary part of the research process, it has tended to lead to a series of sharply dichotomised and over-simplified categories which cannot convey the complexity, or the dynamics, of urban life.

The increase in urban-based African research in the years after World War II highlighted the dilemmas that the structural-functionalists faced when studying social change. Researchers were now continually faced with situations that exacerbated a sociological tendency to contrast order and change. The decline of colonialism, and the emergence of newly independent states throughout the continent, promoted a picture of rapid, and frequently chaotic, change. The existence of such radical changes was in dramatic contrast to the anthropologists' view of traditional African societies in which significant elements were a lack of development and an emphasis on harmony and continuity. Such a framework is centred on the idea of the equilibrium of the system, and the initial reaction of social anthropologists was to try and incorporate change into this framework. As a result,



changes were seen in terms of a "moving equilibrium"<sup>1</sup> or a "succession of different social equilibria".<sup>2</sup> Even in urban areas, where change was very evident, social life continued to be regarded as a series of temporary equilibria connected by a number of crises, the origins of which lay in the "external stimuli making for social change".<sup>3</sup> Social change was therefore seen as something that impinged on 'normal' social life.

In the towns social anthropologists were faced with situations that were radically different from anything that their existing analytical framework and methodology could have prepared them for. It says something for the structural-functional approach that it could, initially at least, be adapted to this changed, and changing, situation. The early emphasis in urban studies was summarised by Epstein who wrote:

The persistence in the towns of tribal customs and values, the abandonment or modification and adaptation of others, and the emergence of specifically urban customs, usages and attitudes raise complex problems .... They raise questions about social and cultural change, and the relationship between them. It was in fact the emergence of these problems rather than the nature of urban society itself which first drew the attention of anthropologists to the towns of Africa.<sup>4</sup>

In this way the study of urban life was seen as a means of delimiting the complex material on change, with the

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<sup>1</sup> Wilson & Wilson (1965:167)

<sup>2</sup> Gluckman (1958:49)

<sup>3</sup> Epstein (1958:234)

<sup>4</sup> Epstein (1961) in Mitchell (1969:115-116)

city itself providing a relatively easily recognisable and circumscribed 'system' within which the study of the general processes of change could be concentrated.<sup>1</sup>

However, it quickly became apparent to some of those working in urban areas that urban life had a logic of its own, and could not simply be viewed in terms of the original rural systems of its participants. The individual came to be seen in terms of his urban environment rather than as a rural person who was losing, to a greater or lesser degree, his rural (or tribal) customs and values. This approach, used most notably in the context of the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt,<sup>2</sup> was to bring about a significant change of emphasis. Urban life could now be seen more frequently in terms of the ways in which individuals moving into towns developed, adapted, and manipulated their roles within the urban context. The concern of the researcher was no longer with what the individual lost in relation to his pre-change situation, but with his relationship to the new situation. As such, urban behaviour was seen in terms of the "on-going nature of urban institutions and the continuities of the urban 'social field'."<sup>3</sup> Thus urban life was seen as a separate

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<sup>1</sup> This approach was centred on the 'culture contact' school of thought e.g. Mair (1938); Fortes (1949); Hunter (1961), and was first used in a specifically urban situation in Hellman's (1948) study of a Johannesburg slum yard.

<sup>2</sup> Particularly Mitchell (1956a) and Epstein (1958). An early summary of the approach and its theoretical underpinnings is given in Gluckman (1961).

<sup>3</sup> Harries-Jones (1969:297)

system in contrast to rural life, in itself a system. In a changing society these systems may run in parallel to each other without attendant chaos and disorder. This 'alternation model',<sup>1</sup> separates off two kinds of systems and two kinds of change which can be studied closely by observing the migrant who, in moving from one system to the other, is forced to change roles and thus must carry around, as it were, different sets of attitudes which may be used when situationally appropriate. This acceptance of the situational nature of human behaviour was an important development in urban studies,<sup>2</sup> but in some ways it served to promote and exaggerate an over-rigid dichotomy between urban and rural life. The effect, if not the intent, was to allow the individual migrant to 'participate' analytically in two separate systems of a very different nature without any apparent signs of conflict. The concept of situational change allowed the individual's involvement in the larger historical changes to be passive, moving as he did from one set of institutions and values to another with ease. The result of this, claims Phillip Mayer, was that Mitchell and Epstein presented "a static and schizoid picture of the migrant's social personality."<sup>3</sup>

Northern Rhodesian towns grew, in a relatively

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<sup>1</sup> Mayer, P. (1962:579)

<sup>2</sup> This is discussed in general terms in Gluckman (1961) and Garbett (1970).

<sup>3</sup> Mayer, P. (1962:580)



short period of time, from nothing, and they are still growing. Like most African urban populations, they are "both unstable and continuously adding to their numbers, principally through immigration."<sup>1</sup> Gluckman and his colleagues were working in a specific economic and political situation and this affected not only the type of data that they produced but also the concepts and models they developed in order to analyse them. As we shall see in later chapters, the Northern Rhodesian colonial administration insisted for many years on viewing the urban worker as someone who was a 'temporary' inhabitant, and policies were directed at ensuring that the African urban population remained in very close contact with their rural origins. This was done by the deliberate promotion of short-term circulatory migration between rural and urban areas, and by tying the available urban housing to wage employment. Though this began to change in the late 1940s,<sup>2</sup> with an increasing emphasis on the stabilisation of the urban population in the following decade,<sup>3</sup> urban studies were necessarily tied to

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<sup>1</sup> Little (1974:5)

<sup>2</sup> Wilson (1941:46-7) attempted to define the population of Broken Hill (now Kabwe) in terms of their migratory patterns. A 'peasant visitor' had spent less than one-third of his time since first leaving his rural home in towns; a 'migrant labourer' between one-third and two-thirds; and the 'temporarily urbanized' over two-thirds, but not all. It was his argument that, in Broken Hill at least, the majority of men were 'temporarily urbanized' (1941:25).

<sup>3</sup> McCulloch (1956:58-65,60)



this dominant pattern of the circulation of migrants. This pattern was characteristic of almost all of Southern and Central Africa, and was brought about by the industrial/employment structure instigated by the settlers (and in particular the mining companies) who gave the migrants few options.<sup>1</sup> It is Garbett's argument that circulatory migration has been

most persistent ... where it is in the political and economic interest of a dominant section of the population to maintain a high degree of residential and social segregation, to control the allocation of political rights, and hence, to influence wage rates and the flow of migration.<sup>2</sup>

Subsequent political and economic changes have greatly affected this pattern of circulatory migration,<sup>3</sup> but the development of urban research has continued, to some extent, to be based on these early influences.

Circulatory migration between town and country is only one of a number of possible patterns of migration. Seymour, for example, breaks up urban migrants<sup>4</sup> into three basic categories: those born in rural areas who migrate to town; those who undergo periodic residential mobility whether it be inter- or intra- urban; and those who "maintain ties with a rural home to which they intend

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:57); Garbett (1975)

<sup>2</sup> Garbett (1975:113)

<sup>3</sup> Parkin (1975:9-10) concludes that it still persists but that its composition and intensity have altered and that it is mainly to be found amongst the unemployed job-seekers.

<sup>4</sup> There is, of course, migration within the rural sector only.

eventually to return."<sup>1</sup> A good deal of debate has centred upon the relative importance of economic and 'extra-economic' factors in the determination of migratory patterns. Some would argue that this is a futile exercise. Amin, for example, comments that "the survey of motivations, by which some sociologists believe they can separate economic from extra-economic motivations, is in reality useless because the economic reason is there in every case and its ideological guise is equally general."<sup>2</sup> But, though few would argue that economic factors are not important determinants of migration, there are many who would insist that we view the 'social', 'cultural', or 'ideological' aspects of migration as analytically separable from, though interconnected with, these economic determinants. The different models that have been developed to explain patterns of migration reflect this debate, as do their inadequacies. The 'rational choice/maximization' model, for example, is borrowed from economists and, through its heavy emphasis on wages and incomes,<sup>3</sup> is unable to explain why people continue to circulate and also has great difficulty in explaining the variations between individual patterns and careers. Similar problems are encountered in 'push-pull' models which seek to understand migration in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:14-16)

<sup>2</sup> Amin (1974:92)

<sup>3</sup> For example, see Harris and Todaro (1970)

individuals being 'pushed' from rural areas because of the limitations of their socio-economic environment, and 'pulled' into town by the various attractions supposedly to be found there.<sup>1</sup>

These models tend to see the actions of migrants as essentially passive, something over which they have no control or choice. But though these forces undoubtedly exist, they should rather be seen as a bias or constraint on, not a simple determinant of, migrant behaviour. In deciding to move into, remain in, leave, or return to, an urban area, the individual is subjected to a variety of constraints at different levels. To understand the impact of these constraints on individual decision-making processes, Garbett proposes a model of circulatory migration<sup>2</sup> which tries by linking "the concept of an individual exercising strategic choices in the pursuit of multiple alternatives to the concepts of social network, field, and the emergent properties of systems"<sup>3</sup> to bridge the gap between the various levels of analysis and, in doing so, avoid "the often marked dichotomy between 'actor-oriented' and 'institutional' types of analysis."<sup>4</sup> In doing this, he is searching for

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<sup>1</sup> For a critical review of various such models that have been developed, see Garbett & Kapferer (1970).

<sup>2</sup> Which he says (1975:125) could "also be applied to the analysis of other types of migration and to other social processes."

<sup>3</sup> Garbett (1975:114)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 125



a flexibility that has eluded many earlier researchers. The migrant, and the process of migrancy, form the basis of the growth of most African towns and an understanding of the factors influencing the process is essential if we are to better understand the nature of urbanization. Additionally, the migrant enables us to see urban life in a wider perspective for, as Garbett points out, "in considering the alternatives confronting a migrant we have to be aware of the dynamics of the social field, spanning both rural and urban contexts, in which the migrant is involved."<sup>1</sup> In using the concept of 'field', he is attempting to remove the burden of analysis from the urban system per se. It is only too apparent that "the process and impact of urbanization in Africa as elsewhere extends far beyond the physical bounds of the city."<sup>2</sup> Our analysis of urban life must be equally capable of moving beyond the superficial physical and demographic boundaries of the town or city. In the same way, we must also avoid seeing urban areas as undifferentiated wholes existing in stark contrast to their rural surrounds. As Little points out, it is not the town itself, but the system encompassing it, that must provide the source of explanation for the process of urbanization.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 120

<sup>2</sup> Knight (1972:4)

<sup>3</sup> Little (1974:102-6)



### 1:3 The Study of a Slum Compound

One of the major problems of studying the growth and development of urban areas is determining a unit of study that will provide conclusions that are more than specific in nature. It is this problem that makes statistics, which are relatively comprehensive and comparable, such an attractive proposition when it comes to defining and describing urban life. The search for a representative town or compound is a futile (and possibly dangerous) task. Each has its own unique characteristics. It is in the origin of the differences that we must seek to find the generalities. Malota is not like any other compound within Livingstone. It is, and always has been, an option open to all Africans arriving in Livingstone. People who moved there chose to do so rather than deciding upon some other possibility. If, therefore we can determine what brought, and still brings, people to live there, we will discover facts about the other options that are available. If we do this over a period of time we will be able to determine what factors have caused the various options to become available.

Malota is a particularly valuable subject for study because it allows us this time perspective.<sup>1</sup> In particular I have concentrated on the period 1952-1971 for which there is detailed and comparative statistical

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<sup>1</sup> Gutkind points out that most African urban studies have been almost wholly synchronic and argues that we need more diachronic studies "whereby we keep under observation the older and the newer African towns and townships over a considerable period of time." (1969:266)

data from a number of sources. The distinction between the demographic and sociological aspects of urban life is an artificial one created by the way in which we abstract and present our data. Demographic variables cannot, as Knoop rather bizarrely suggested earlier, 'generate' urbanism. Both are alternative ways of describing the same reality. Demographic figures such as sex ratios, population size, ethnic heterogeneity, or age structure emerge from the decisions and actions of many people who are constrained by a series of social, economic, and political factors, past and present, urban and rural. Social composition is therefore an "emergent property from an ongoing social process"<sup>1</sup> and the presentation of demographic characteristics is not separate from (nor interchangeable with) sociological analysis but an integral and dynamic part of it.

The available demographic data covers a period of enormous change and expansion in Zambian urban areas and, most importantly, involves that phase during which independence was achieved. I have thus been able to consider the compound in both the pre- and post-independence eras. The main sources of data on Malota are three surveys carried out in 1952, 1961 and 1971. McCulloch's detailed statistical survey of Livingstone in late 1952 and early 1953<sup>2</sup> provides not only detailed information on Malota<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kapferer (1972:63)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956)

<sup>3</sup> Referred to by McCulloch as the "Grass Compound".

but also allows comparisons with other compounds and the town as a whole. Nearly ten years later, a study of Malota was carried out by a member of staff of the then Rhodes-Livingstone Museum.<sup>1</sup> Though only a preliminary report was ever prepared, it provides interesting data of both an historical and a demographic nature. Finally, the Municipal Council of Livingstone carried out its own 100% sample survey of the compound in 1971. This was in response to a number of demands for action in relation to the compound, a matter which had become an increasingly sensitive political issue.<sup>2</sup> I later gained direct access to the information collected in this survey, and though the official report was of limited value I was provided with the individual household returns from which I have been able to rework the data in terms of the specific objectives of this study.<sup>3</sup>

My own field work was carried out between October 1970 and August 1971.<sup>4</sup> Originally centred on the study of 'tribal elders' on the compound, and later extended to encompass officials of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), it also involved the collection of detailed household data through personal observation, informal

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<sup>1</sup> Reynolds (1962)

<sup>2</sup> Times of Zambia, 24/1/1971; 3/3/1971.

<sup>3</sup> In the remainder of the study I will refer to the official report as '1971 Municipal Survey', and to information from the individual returns as '1971 Municipal Survey Household Returns'.

<sup>4</sup> When it was prematurely terminated for reasons outside of my control



interviews, and a questionnaire submitted to the 'landlords' of the compound's plots. This latter activity was unfortunately halted because the Municipal Council wished to carry out their own survey. The small sample that I was able to collect (just under 5%) was statistically inadequate, but I have used the information gathered (cross-checked with personal observation and information from the 1971 Municipal Survey Household Returns) where I have felt that it served a useful purpose.

The study is basically broken down into three sections though they are highly interconnected. By considering certain aspects of life in a particular, restricted, urban situation, I hope to be able to draw out a number of general features related to the development of urban areas in Zambia, and in particular the complex two-way relationship that exists between the population of a specific housing area and the wider environment.

The first section looks in some detail at urban development in the country from the beginning of the century. An attempt is made to elicit those factors that were responsible for the different and changing attitudes of the policy makers and administrators. In this way we are able to determine the constraints placed on urban dwellers and migrants, the limitations on the options available to them, and how they changed as various political and economic factors altered. In doing this,



we will be able to see how the type of housing available to the urban population varied over time.

The second section is devoted to a detailed study of the development of Malota within this historical framework, and in particular the way in which the social composition has changed over the last twenty years. Starting from the assumptions that "population changes provide a reflection of social change",<sup>1</sup> and that the social composition of the compound can be viewed as "emergent from a set of individual choices and decisions subject to a variety of constraints",<sup>2</sup> four specific demographic variables - sex ratio, plot composition, age distribution, and occupational patterns - are looked at over this period of time, and also compared with other housing areas in the town and in the rest of urban Zambia. In order to give substance to the general, abstracted conclusions thus obtained, I then look at the social composition of twenty individual plots on the compound in order to show how individual resources, career patterns, and socio-economic backgrounds are interwoven with a series of constraints at different levels to provide a wide variety of patterns and alternatives. In this way I hope to show that slum life can be a positive choice on the part of the population who

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<sup>1</sup> Knoop (1971b:10)

<sup>2</sup> Kapferer (1972:63)

are by no means the "rural outcasts and urban misfits"<sup>1</sup> that they are often assumed to be.

The most obvious change in urban Zambia is the political one - the movement from colonial protectorate to independent republic. The final section of the study concentrates on two aspects of political activity on Malota - the apparent retention of a colonial institution, tribal elders; and the section officials of the ruling political party. Though these two 'institutions' apparently represent the opposite ends of the political spectrum, contrasting the modern and the traditional, the formal and the informal, and the strong and the weak, they share a common feature in that they are both dominated by particular tribal groups. The apparent significance of this was emphasised by the fact that, at this point in time, it was generally believed that Zambia was being torn apart by 'tribalism'. By a careful study of the participants in these two forms of political activity, I hope to show that this 'tribalism' is a consequence of a combination of other factors which are centred on the relationship between Malota and Livingstone, and between Livingstone and the rest of Zambia, and which are related to socio-economic divisions within the urban situation rather than to ethnic divisions which originated in the rural areas.

The purpose throughout the study therefore is to see how, in the setting of a particular residential unit

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<sup>1</sup> Ross (1973:297)

in Livingstone, changes in the political and economic structure caused by the advent of independence can be related to changes in the social organisation and values of the population. Thus, for example, I will try to show how changes in attitudes of those in authority towards housing brought about changes in the compound's social composition and how this, in turn, affected its political development. At the same time I have tried to avoid the assumption that changes within the compound can only be a consequence of independence by trying to trace the relationships between a number of factors that bring about the decisions of individuals to live on Malota, and not elsewhere. Thus the structural framework is seen as imposing a number of constraints within which individuals can decide on alternatives and develop appropriate strategies.



## CHAPTER 2

### URBAN ZAMBIA: 1900 - 1950

#### 2:1 Introduction

At the very South-Western tip of Zambia lies a hill from which a man is able to see the boundaries of four countries simultaneously. Looking over Zambia's own border and out across the Zambezi river he finds the heavily guarded border of Rhodesia, the short stretch of Botswana's Northern borders, and to the West the deserted Caprivi strip leading into South-African-controlled Namibia. This view summarises Zambia's geographical position for, surrounded by eight other countries, it is a land-locked 'island' in the centre of the African continent (See Map 1). Covering an area of over 290,000 square miles - three times the size of the United Kingdom - it has a population of only just over four million.<sup>1</sup> However, a large proportion of Zambia's inhabitants live in urban areas compared with other African countries.<sup>2</sup> This urban population is almost

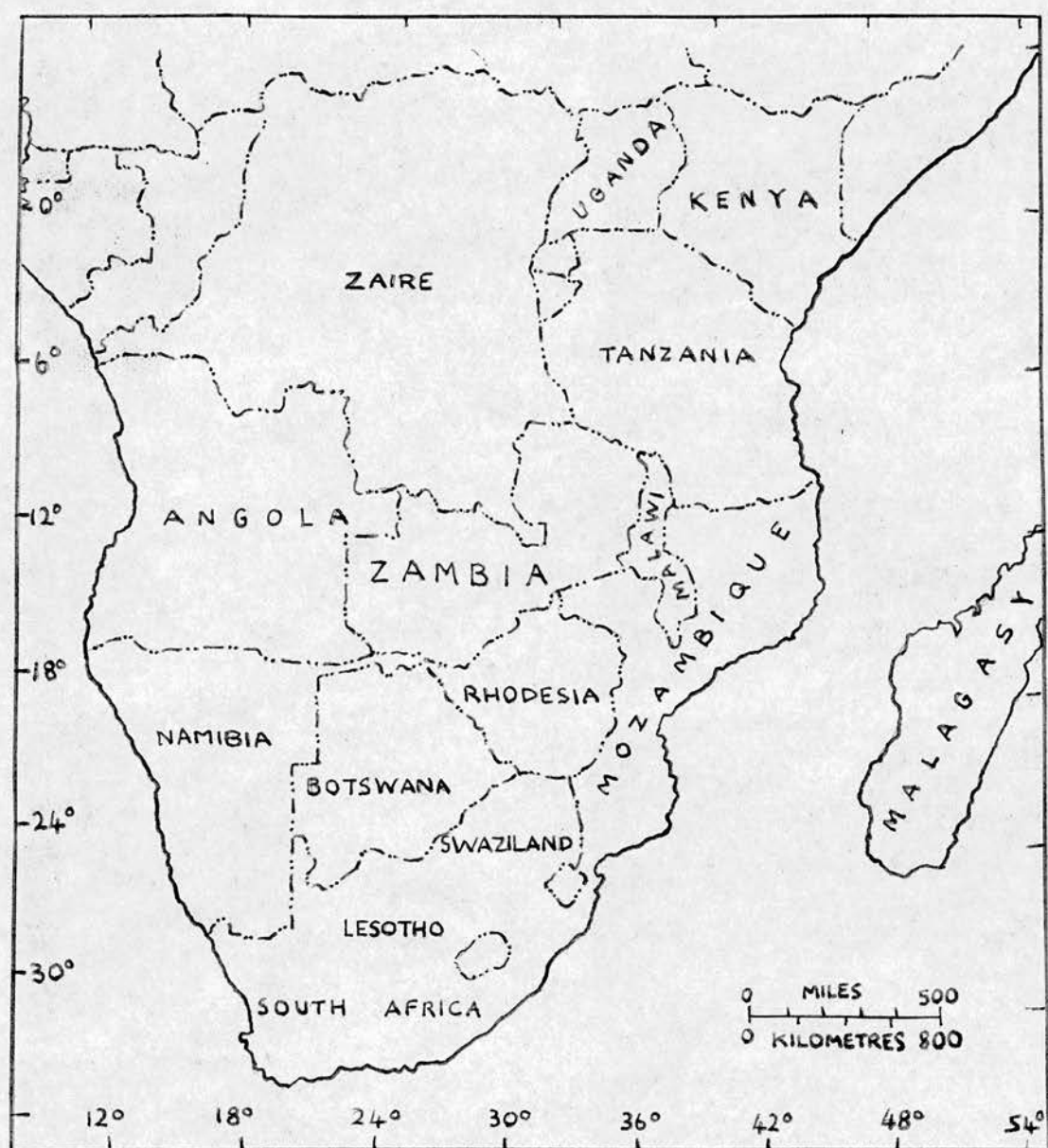
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<sup>1</sup> Republic of Zambia. Census of Population and Housing: 1969, First Report, p.A2

<sup>2</sup> Jackman (1973:12). Heisler (1974:32) shows that the proportion increased from 18% in 1963 to 30% in 1969.



**MAP 1: ZAMBIA AND HER NEIGHBOURS**



**Source: Davies (1971:11)**

totally concentrated in the towns that lie on the Copperbelt in the North-West and along the line of the railway that runs down from this area to the capital, Lusaka and then on to the Southernmost town, Livingstone, where it crosses into Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup> Yet at the turn of the century, there were no urban areas of any sort in the Territory.

Some sort of administrative framework for the area had first been set up in the decade between 1889 and 1899, with the British South Africa Company playing a dominant role.<sup>2</sup> For many years, however, the Company showed little further interest preferring to concentrate its activities South of the Zambezi. Nor were the area's mineral resources to be immediately exploited for they were overshadowed by the easily worked 15% copper ore which had been discovered to the North in Katanga, and which was the object of very large investment by Belgian mining interests. For a number of years the Territory was treated as little more than a border outpost, and long-term development was primarily seen in terms of the area's relationship to its Southern neighbours. Indeed its major value at first was the ability to provide large supplies of cheap labour for

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<sup>1</sup> The railway line was closed at the Zambian-Rhodesian border in 1973.

<sup>2</sup> In 1889 and 1890 Orders-In-Council were issued which divided the area into North-Western and North-Eastern Rhodesia and placed the administration of the territory firmly in the hands of the company. For a detailed look at the complexities of the country's establishment, see Gann (1958; 1964)

other countries.<sup>1</sup> The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia was to become an increasingly popular idea amongst the administrators, though not with the settlers themselves who thought that they would be "left to the mercy of a bunch of junior officials."<sup>2</sup> The effect of these attitudes was that little attention was paid to the North and it was to be over a quarter of a century before what are now Zambia's largest cities and towns became anything more than villages, or even bush.

## 2:2 The Beginnings of Urban Life

It has always been a popular pastime for urban sociologists to consider the questions of when a village becomes a town, or a town becomes a city. In fact, most cities have very humble beginnings and, administrative nomenclature apart, develop from one level to another over a period of time.<sup>3</sup> We do not have to look far back in the history of any country to find small collections of huts, shacks, or even tents, that have since become large cities. The original functions may quickly be replaced, or even forgotten, but these origins are an integral part of their development and can provide important clues to

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<sup>1</sup> According to Berger (1974:12):

"In 1928 the total number of Northern Rhodesians employed in Southern Rhodesia was 21,334, and recruitment that year was more than 4,000 men .... Some 10,500 Northern Rhodesian workers were estimated to be in Katanga in 1929.

<sup>2</sup> Gann (1964:175)

<sup>3</sup> There are of course exceptions to this, the most spectacular being the buildings of new capitals.



the pattern and nature of a town's subsequent history.

At the beginning of the century Fort Jameson (now called Chipata) was the administrative headquarters of the British South Africa Company in North-Eastern Rhodesia, with Kalomo as its equivalent in the North-West. All of the first towns in Northern Rhodesia started out with some specific function such as territorial administration or trading. The very first, later to be called Livingstone, was a small community of traders and missionaries situated at a spot on the banks of the Zambezi known as the 'old Drift'. Described by Gann as "a hot, steamy and miserable little place where malaria and blackwater fever were a constant menace to health and life",<sup>1</sup> it was little more than a frontier post. Changes began to occur when the railway from Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia finally reached and crossed the Zambezi at the Victoria Falls in 1904.<sup>2</sup> The Company quickly saw the potential of this new situation and decided to set up the new town of Livingstone at a point about seven miles from the 'Old Drift'. This was an unpopular move with the inhabitants despite the obvious advantages (both in terms of the commercial potential and the healthier environment) but when the stands went on sale in 1905 they were quickly taken up and the town began to prosper. The Company were also quick to see the advantages of com-

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<sup>1</sup> Gann (1964:138-39)

<sup>2</sup> The Falls are now more frequently known, in Zambia at least, by their Kololo name -- Mosi-Oa-Tunya (The smoke that roars).



binning their commercial and administrative centres and, in 1907, Livingstone replaced Kalomo as the 'capital' of the North-Western territory.<sup>1</sup> The town's importance was derived from its position as a gateway into and out of Northern Rhodesia for the country's major resource at the time - people. It was the main point of exit for those Africans moving to the labour markets of the South, and the main point of entry for Europeans who were beginning to move into the country.

These developments stimulated further important changes in the town. The country's only newspaper, the Livingstone Mail, was established there with the result that whatever political activity there was amongst the Europeans tended to be based there.<sup>2</sup> In 1911 a further logical step was taken when North-Western and North-Eastern Rhodesia were combined and Livingstone became the joint capital of the territory. Though at this stage less than 5% of the population lived within twenty miles of the line-of-rail,<sup>3</sup> the decision to place the capital at Livingstone pointed to the fact that the country's centre of gravity was to be firmly centred around the

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<sup>1</sup> However, it was, as Gann (1964:140) records, still little more than a village with a population in 1910 of just 277 Europeans (191 men, 49 women, and 37 children). It did however have running water, electricity and a cold storage plant.

<sup>2</sup> The importance of the Livingstone Mail in the development of the town and the country is further discussed in Gann (1964) and Allen (1972).

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1974:14).

railway which had reached the Congo in 1909. The improvements in communications meant that the country could effectively be run from one place, and Livingstone's proximity to Southern Rhodesia made it easily the most suitable centre.<sup>1</sup>

The next decade was to bring the idea of amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia to a peak and Livingstone's future began to look insecure, for such a move would inevitably make Salisbury the joint capital. As a result, industrial development remained at a very low level, both in the town and throughout the country as a whole, until the late 1920s.<sup>2</sup> However, the Company's wish to amalgamate was thwarted and their interest in controlling Northern Rhodesia declined as their administrative deficit increased. Eventually it was agreed that the British Government should take over administrative control and a Governor was installed in Livingstone, which was confirmed as the capital.<sup>3</sup> This was in 1924 and it led to a commercial boom in the town with a good

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<sup>1</sup> Gelfand (1961:179) shows that, even at this stage, there were less than 1500 Europeans living in Northern Rhodesia, of which 83% were located in the North-Western sector.

<sup>2</sup> The 1941 Government Report on the Copperbelt Disturbances commented that, until about 1926, "a native who wished to earn a wage in excess of something very low indeed - say 5s. a month with food - had to seek work outside the territory."

<sup>3</sup> Gann (1964:191) summarises the agreement as follows:

"As far as Northern Rhodesia was concerned, the Imperial Government promised to relieve the Company of the Administration of the Territory as from April 1, 1924."

deal of money being invested. It was not long, however, before further developments began to overtake the town. The discovery of copper, and the first serious attempts to exploit it, were to transform the country.<sup>1</sup>

Copper had been mined in this area long before the European settlers arrived, possibly several hundred years. During the 1890s some preliminary exploration was carried out, and a few small mines were opened. But, dominated by Katanga copper, the industry lay virtually dormant until the 1920s when world copper prices began to rise. At this stage, a good deal of money was invested, and by 1927 a number of major projects were on hand and copper was well on the way to becoming Northern Rhodesia's economic base. It was not long before the Copperbelt's potential significance became abundantly clear, and the disadvantages of Livingstone as the base for government were pointed out. In 1929

the problem arose whether the Administration should spend any more money on a township where even the highest in the land were living in appalling conditions .... Then there was the future to be considered. Livingstone lay right on the edge of the Territory, far away from the agricultural districts North of the Kafue, or from the Copperbelt; the township would never become a road junction, and no branch lines were ever likely to start from there .... In 1929 Anglo-American, Rhodesian Selection Trust, as well as three Unofficial Members addressed a memorandum to Government, in which they emphasised that economic development would centre beyond the Kafue, that the capital should be nearer to resident communities having permanent business with

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<sup>1</sup> For further details of the town's early days see Phillipson (1975)



Government, and that local foodstuffs were inadequate at Livingstone where the climate was bad.<sup>1</sup>

Despite furious protests from the local population, this soon became the generally accepted attitude and in 1931 it was decided to move the capital to Lusaka. Originally nothing more than a railway siding, it had been made a township in 1913, and had developed into a minor marketing centre.<sup>2</sup> Its location as a capital was seen as desirable because it was near, but not actually on, the Copperbelt. Ironically, the planner of Lusaka prophesied that it would never be great or important city,<sup>3</sup> but saw it simply as an administrative centre.<sup>4</sup> Just how low the level of urban development was at this point in time is summarised by Jackman who, basing her figures on a population map of south-east Central Africa drawn up by Baker and White,<sup>5</sup> remarks that there were

no concentrations along the railway, in fact the northern line-of-rail appears to have been very sparsely populated. The Copperbelt was taken to warrant only one dot (5000 people) placed on Ndola; slightly more people were placed around Kabwe, but the heavier concentrations were along the southern

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<sup>1</sup> Gann (1964:257-58). Anglo-American and Rhodesian Selection Trust were the major mining interests in the Copperbelt development.

<sup>2</sup> Development Planning and Research Unit, Lusaka (1972:1).

<sup>3</sup> The development plan that was drawn up envisaged a town based on spacious garden city principles with provision made for a population of 10,000 made up of half Europeans and half Africans.

<sup>4</sup> Gann (1964:259).

<sup>5</sup> Baker and White (1946)

line-of-rail near Mazabuka and Choma. Lusaka was not even mentioned in the description.<sup>1</sup>

The late 1920s were to be the take-off point both for the copper industry and for the process of urbanization in Northern Rhodesia. Fifteen years later, copper production would have risen twenty-fold and the African population in towns would be almost five times as great. This was to be a very different situation from the first quarter of the century when the little urban development that did occur had been very closely related to the needs of the colonial administration, and had been physically linked to the railway system.

### 2:3 The Urban Population

In this brief summary of the origins of Zambia's urban areas, the emphasis has been very much on the European population. Though the towns were set up by the settlers, to satisfy their own needs, they were of course very dependent on a sizeable African population to carry out certain tasks.<sup>2</sup> By 1931, for example, it was estimated that Livingstone had an African population of 2100 and Ndola 4100.<sup>3</sup> The number of Africans in wage employ-

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<sup>1</sup> Jackman (1973:58)

<sup>2</sup> In 1926 the European population was still less than 6000 and constituted less than a half per cent of the total.

<sup>3</sup> Coulter (1967:84). The figure for Livingstone seems to me to be very inaccurate, but as it is certainly an underestimation the point remains the same.

ment outside of mining was calculated at this time to be almost 50,000.<sup>1</sup> This is apart from the substantial number of the population working in other countries. It is obvious then that, though the process of urbanization (in terms of the growth of towns) may have been initially slow, migration in search of wage employment had very quickly become an important part of the life of the country's African population. Thus many people had their first contact with urban life outside of Northern Rhodesia, and quite frequently by the time they first arrived in one of their own towns had a good deal of urban experience behind them.

The initial causes of large-scale migration in search of work can be found in the introduction, at an early stage, of a system of taxation. The poll tax was introduced between 1900 and 1904, though its collection was enforced gradually, "following the general economic development of the country beginning in the Victoria Falls and Tonga country."<sup>2</sup> Initially the tax could be paid in kind, but in 1905 the decision was made that it could only be paid in cash. This was to have a radical effect for, from now on, many men would have no other option than to seek wage employment in order to pay their taxes. The raising of this tax brought in a good deal of revenue, but the authorities could hardly have been unaware of its

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson (1967:156)

<sup>2</sup> Gann (1964:103). The rate varied in different parts of the country, but was standardised at 10s for each adult male in 1914.



effect on patterns of migrations, and its potential value in providing a large supply of cheap labour.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it is possible to surmise that this was one of the original purposes of the tax, though this was always denied by those who were involved.<sup>2</sup> Whatever the intentions, the effect was to stimulate, or pressurise, people to move from their rural homes. However, it was also a crucial assumption of the early administrators that Africans were essentially rural people and should remain so. Any periods of time spent in towns should have two main features: they should have a purpose - work; and they should be temporary. The policies that were to emerge from this basic assumption were centred on two separate rationales. One was the idea that the African should be discouraged from remaining in town for any length of time because this might lead to him becoming 'detribalised'. As a result, he would be unable to re-adapt when he returned, as he inevitably must, to

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<sup>1</sup> The control of tax over labour supply is shown in the following incident, recorded by Heisler (1974:37): "At Kasempa in 1909 ... the tax was doubled partly to increase the supply of labour to the nearby mine, which suffered from an acute labour shortage."

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Orde-Browne (1938:9-10). Berger (1974:37), who regards tax registration and collection as being virtually the 'raison d'etre' of the early Provincial Administration, records the warning of Lord Passfield - the Colonial Secretary - in 1930:

"I may remind you that it is contrary to the policy of His Majesty's Government that any taxation levied upon the natives should be such that, in its results, it obliges them to labour for wages as the only practicable means of obtaining the money to pay their taxes."

his rural origins. The second was the theory that Africans only came into towns to achieve some short-term financial goal, such as the payment of tax, after which they would voluntarily leave for their rural homes until the need for more capital demanded their return to town. This is the concept of what became known as the 'target-worker'.<sup>1</sup> Both these views, though contradicting each other, were disadvantageous to the African worker. The implication of the former was that Africans should not be paid high wages which would only encourage them to remain in urban areas. The latter takes no account of the fact that wage levels gave very little scope for the accumulation of capital, providing little more than a subsistence existence.<sup>2</sup> Nor did it allow for the possibility that the circulation of labour between urban and rural areas was based on the rational decision that "it was more profitable for them to divide their labour between work for

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<sup>1</sup> Baldwin (1966:114-116). Heisler (1974:28-19) extends this to a distinction between permanent and temporary target-workers. He says of the former: "When the planned purchase of consumer durables was completed in the towns, where they were cheaper than in the countryside, the Permanent Target-Workers had accomplished their missions". Of the latter he says: "It became increasingly difficult for families to obtain subsistence in the villages while males acquired capital in the towns. Town earnings were then consumed for subsistence rather than capital purposes".

<sup>2</sup> Marquard (1967:237) comments that: "Generally speaking, a month's work enables the tax-payer to discharge his obligations." Such a statement obviously ignores the fact that a man has expenses while in town and assumes that all of his wages is used in paying his tax.

wages and subsistence agriculture."<sup>1</sup> In its most sophisticated form it was also possible for those holding this view of the target-worker to argue that high wage levels would be bad because they would reduce the labour supply.<sup>2</sup> It was on these assumptions that the earliest decisions about town life, and the way it was to be organized, were based.

An urban population has to be housed, and in the early days of Northern Rhodesia's towns the two crucial questions relating to this problem were control and segregation.<sup>3</sup> The feelings of the European population on this subject were accurately summarised by Coulter when he wrote that: "Every White settlement of any size has its segregated Native quarters. These are usually a mile or more from the business section, and where possible across a railway, stream, a flat or other natural barrier forming a strip of no-man's-land."<sup>4</sup> Nature was to be called upon to assist segregation wherever possible. As townships grew and the presence of the African population became more and more obvious, pressure from the local European population would mount to have some sort of 'compound' or location built, which would make it easier

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:123).

<sup>2</sup> This is reflected in the concept of the 'backward-bending supply curve.' See Berg (1961); Barber (1961:212).

<sup>3</sup> The latter was necessary in order that "the many abuses inseparable from a mixed community should be dealt with." (Livingstone Mail, August 3, 1907).

<sup>4</sup> Coulter (1967:78).



to control the Africans. Once again, this was aptly summarised by Coulter who, talking of these locations, said:

Like Topsy they 'just grewed' until they became large enough or menacing enough to command White attention. Then a location manager was appointed to safeguard the interests of the Natives in the interest of the Whites.<sup>1</sup>

Early records of the Livingstone Management Board record continual discussions on the problem of control, and the frequent introduction of rules and regulations relating to permits and passes, restriction of the number of people allowed to live on any one plot,<sup>2</sup> and the production and consumption of 'kaffir' beer.<sup>3</sup> As early as 1914, Livingstone had introduced a rule that 'natives' should not be outside their compound at night without written permission. This was an extension of the Natives in Townships Regulations that had been introduced in Northern Rhodesia five years earlier. Under these laws, no African was allowed to live in the townships unless he was permanently employed by a European or an Asian.<sup>4</sup> These rules were regularised and made more stringent with

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> It was announced in the Government Gazette (1915:125) that, in relation to Livingstone, "the owner or occupier of any stand within the surveyed township shall be deemed to have contravened these rules if a greater number of natives than following occupy such stand for any night. Area of stand not exceeding 66 X 100 4; 55 X 132 5; 88 X 132 7".

<sup>3</sup> Livingstone Mail, August 31, 1912.

<sup>4</sup> Gann (1964:148) points out that "Indians were accepted as townsmen right from the start."

the introduction of the Townships Ordinance in 1929 and the Municipal Corporations Ordinance of 1927. The local European population of a Municipal Corporation had a good deal more power than they would have in a Township. They did not just constitute an administrative board carrying out the instructions of central government, but had the right to make their own bye-laws.<sup>1</sup> However, in 1930 only two urban areas were considered important enough to be made municipal corporations - Livingstone and Ndola.

Such stringent controls meant that town life was very rigid for the African population, and in this sense Heisler's description of the early compounds as 'Labour Camps' seems to me to be very apt.<sup>2</sup> A further reflection of the attitude towards African urban areas was that, between 1913 and 1929, the compounds came under the official control of what were known as Local Village Management Boards. The pretence that an African, being rural, could not cope with urban life, even for short periods, was extended by assuming that compounds were little more than villages in the towns. By the late 1920s, the colonial administration had developed a rigorous policy, with the necessary rules and regulations to carry it out, towards African urban life. Essentially they were seeking industrialisation without urbanization and its attendant problems. Thus when Africans were in town they should be strictly controlled. If their

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<sup>1</sup> Marquard (1967:268)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:85-102)

presence was not strictly necessary, that is if they did not have work, then they should be returned to their village. Indeed, even when they were working, they should be encouraged to return to their villages as often as possible. One of the main consequences of such a policy was that everything was done to make sure that town held no great attraction for the African population. The overall effect was that Africans were:

Denied a permanent stake in urban life .... Their natural base was held to be in the native areas from which they came and to which they were expected to return. The organization of the economy on this basis committed Africans - whether or not they would have been disposed otherwise - to a migratory pattern of employment.<sup>1</sup>

At this stage, however, the copper industry began to emerge with its own particular labour needs, and this was to have a critical effect on urban development generally.

#### 2:4 The Urban Compound

In 1927 there were only about 8500 men working in the mines of Northern Rhodesia. In the following year this was to virtually double, and would keep on increasing until it reached a peak of 31,941 in September 1931.<sup>2</sup> New townships were growing up around the mines, and the older ones were expanding rapidly. Though the world-wide depression of the 1930s was to have a drastic effect - three mines closing and the labour force being quartered - the set back was only temporary and expansion continued

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<sup>1</sup> Barber (1967:100-101)

<sup>2</sup> Berger (1974:13)



with the Copperbelt becoming the country's most important urban area.<sup>1</sup> The dominance that mining achieved was to have an important effect on urban policy and, in particular, the urban housing system. But what was urban life like for the African population during these 'boom' years. It seems safe to start from Heisler's position that, whatever the economic position, "towns were grim places for family life at least until the 1950s."<sup>2</sup>

The Employment of Natives Ordinance of 1929 made employers responsible for providing their African employees with accommodation. By doing this the administration were trying to ensure that sufficient housing would be available, since it was increasingly obvious that they themselves could not cope. As a result, there were a number of different types of compound. The larger industrial concerns, and in particular the mining companies, normally provided locations for their own workers. The government, the local management board, some of the larger commercial firms, and a great many European house-owners would also build their own compounds. But, as Wilson noted in his study of Broken Hill,<sup>3</sup> this in no way catered for the whole urban population - even those who were employed - and a great number of domestic and commercial workers, together with those people who were

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:1-2)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:48)

<sup>3</sup> Wilson (1941; 1942)

self-employed, had to find accommodation in the town locations which were run by local management boards. These were the usual provisions that were made in most townships. They were generally inadequate, and the Ordinances themselves were difficult to enforce. Berger has commented that:

Northern Rhodesia, which had seemed a backwater of imperialism in 1924, seemed even more so after the depression. The Administration was in a permanent state of crisis caused by poor revenues and shortage of staff, and its response to problems was soon conditioned: 'how much?' and 'how many men?' were the ruling considerations.<sup>1</sup>

Shortages, and consequently overcrowding, were very soon a standard problem in all urban areas.

But there were very great differences between compounds. The Administration quickly made it apparent that it suited them if mining areas were to become 'company towns', with the mining companies responsible for the welfare and housing of their employees. The companies were evidently happy with this arrangement for it meant that they

obtained full control of their townships, a valuable privilege; for if outsiders were allowed to come in and acquire property, they would demand local self-government, raise rates and wrest the companies' property out of the shareholders' hands. The mines thus received land at favourable rates and developed their own electrical, sewerage and water supplies as well as houses, roads, cinemas and sports grounds, a task undertaken with accustomed efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:26)

<sup>2</sup> Gann (1964:210-211)

This adoption of essentially governmental functions by the mining companies had a number of consequences. The District Officers' role was usurped by the Copperbelt compound manager, though the former retained legal right of entry. The mining compounds were recognisably superior in terms of general housing standards and the facilities that they provided. This is possibly because the companies had the necessary experience and resources (both financial and technical) to make this so, rather than any major difference in their approach to the problem of urban labour. But the mine compounds were different in a number of other ways. This was summarised by Davis in the early 1930s when he wrote:

In contrast to the mine location there is an absence of discipline in the life of the town Native community. Few general rules exist. Uniformity in hours, work and pay is absent. Each worker is on his own with responsibility to his individual employer. The residents of these locations offer wide contrasts. The sophisticated and the raw native, the seasoned worker and the novice, the well-paid and the unemployed, live side-by-side .... It is, moreover, a fluctuating population; families may be here today and gone tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>

Though, originally, miners had lived in what were little more than huts made of sun-dried bricks and roofed with thatch, these were normally temporary measures and, once a mine was assured of a future, much better quality housing would be eventually provided, constructed of burnt brick and cement, with some thought given to ventilation and insulation.<sup>2</sup> Though they were much inferior

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<sup>1</sup> Davis (1967:312)

<sup>2</sup> Gann (1964:211)



to even the lowliest European housing, they were substantially better than the general standard of municipal councils in towns like Livingstone. Much of that town's housing was a continual cause for concern and was regarded as a permanent threat to the health of the town.<sup>1</sup> Coulter drew a graphic picture of a typical municipal location when he described Ndola's in 1932:

Seventeen hundred conical mud and wattle huts with thatched roofs and earth floors of varying diameters have been built by successive families of Natives. There is no order of arrangement other than their twelve-foot separation from each other. Stooping to enter a low narrow door, one finds himself in a dark, unventilated interior. Some of the smoke from the central fire issues through the grass roof and en route leaves the wall and ceiling ebonised by oily soot. The little family or group of single men squat about the fire, for the place is innocent of furnishings beyond the sleeping-mats and cheap<sup>2</sup> knick-knacks which one finds in a Native kraal.

The development of the Copperbelt therefore led in its early days to some small improvements in general housing standards, but municipal housing remained just as bad and even probably deteriorated with the sudden growth of the population.

In theory, the people living on the mine compounds were miners and their families, and the miner normally lived and worked with the same group of people. Wilson found that, in practice, the compounds were not as homogeneous as this, and in Broken Hill 21.6% of the men

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<sup>1</sup> Orde-Browne (1938:62) reported that in a compound recently taken over by the municipal council "long rows of cells about 7½ ft. square ... built with soft mortar ... a refuge for ticks, bugs, and all sorts of pests formed a squalid courtyard."

<sup>2</sup> Coulter (1967:79)

living in mine housing were neither miners nor their families.<sup>1</sup> But, despite this, the population of the mining compounds did not constitute the "variegated lot of hawkers, general labourers, domestic servants and its contingent of chancers and prostitutes"<sup>2</sup> that frequented the country's municipal locations.

We can see then that the emphasis placed by the Administration on the need for all male urban migrants to be employed, brought about a direct relationship between a man's job and the type of housing that he lived in, and that different types of compounds sprang up for different categories of workers.

Between 1930 and 1950 the urban population was to be multiplied by ten, and reached a figure of almost a quarter of a million. By that time Northern Rhodesia had become one of the most urbanized countries in tropical Africa in terms of the percentage of its population living in urban areas.<sup>3</sup> But this very rapid growth inevitably brought a number of problems. Epstein's informants described the Copperbelt in its earlier days as being a place of "hatred and fighting between the tribes", and they spoke of the "killing that went on in the paths

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<sup>1</sup> Figures derived from Wilson (1941:20). It seems likely, for reasons that will be dealt with later, that this was a higher proportion than to be found on the Copperbelt generally.

<sup>2</sup> Gann (1964:143-44). Figures for Ndola municipal location in 1932 suggest that about 40% of the population were domestics; 40% were clerks, shop boys or labourers; and the remainder were either independent craftsmen or in 'miscellaneous' employment [Marquard (1967:269)].

<sup>3</sup> Seymour (1976:26)

leading from the Beer Hall; and of the gangs of young men who prowled around the compound at night, making it unsafe for people to appear outside their homes after dark."<sup>1</sup> Added to this, there was a general discontent on the Copperbelt due to "grievances about pay, maltreatment, bad working conditions, and even about the old tax rates."<sup>2</sup> As we shall see in a later chapter, African political expression on most matters was severely limited, and what little there was had to be based on a system of tribal elders that developed on the Copperbelt during the 1930s - just one more way in which the urban African's rural origins were constantly emphasised.<sup>3</sup> As Davis pointed out, "Municipal Councils are, like all elected bodies, primarily interested in their constituents; and since these are Europeans, Native affairs are made to subserve the interest of the European employers."<sup>4</sup> What advantages did urban Northern Rhodesia therefore provide during the 1930s and 1940s that made it attractive to migrants? For, although the poll tax continued to be levied, it was quite apparent that many men would still make the move into town even if it were not. Was it, as some would suggest, a simple question of superior economic rewards?

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:26)

<sup>2</sup> Meebelo (1971:256)

<sup>3</sup> Meebelo's study looks in some detail at how the discontent of Africans with the colonial system was expressed in a number of informal, semi-legal, and illegal ways.

<sup>4</sup> Marquard (1967:270)



In 1920, well before the copper 'boom', the average wage of the African wage labourer had been in the region of 7s 6d a month, with a 2s allowance for food.<sup>1</sup> It has to be remembered that, in these early days, cash was normally only one part of a worker's 'wages'. Not only did the employer have to provide housing (or at least pay for it), but he was also, until the mid-1950s, legally obliged to provide rations or pay cash in lieu. The wage levels themselves varied greatly from one industry to another,<sup>2</sup> and the value of the rations provided could therefore make a very great difference. Wilson attempted to provide a cash value to the rations supplied by employers, and he concluded that, overall (cash plus rations), government employees were the best off in Broken Hill with an average monthly wage of 34s 2d. Close behind were the miners with 32s 11d, and the average for all the workers in the town was 30s 5d.<sup>3</sup> Of course, these averages hide a wide range of wage scales, from a starting wage of 5s for juvenile miners and some commercial workers, to a possible maximum of £7 10s on the mines.

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<sup>1</sup> Gelfand (1961:105)

<sup>2</sup> According to Berger (1974:18), the rates in 1935 were highest on the mines where the average was 23s 6d. This compared with 13s 6d on the railways, 12s 6d at the Zambezi Sawmills in the South, and between 5s and 10s for farm labour.

<sup>3</sup> Wilson (1942:10-11). It is interesting to note that, in Broken Hill at least, miners actually received less cash than any other category of worker except Management Board employees, but were heavily compensated by the superior rations they received.

In Broken Hill miners were paid less than their Copper-belt colleagues, mainly because the price of zinc was lower. In an attempt to compensate for this, the mining company provided five-acre plots of land for 750 of its employees. These plots enabled a man to have two or more rooms built, and also to grow corn and vegetables. Most of the workers seemed to regard this as more than adequate compensation, and the scheme was copied, on a smaller scale, by the Railways and the Government for their employees. Such schemes were, of course, an incentive to employees to stay longer in town and to become committed to an urban way of life. This was only one of a number of signs that began to appear during the 1930s of an ambivalence towards the whole question of urbanization, particularly on the mines. Some of the mining companies felt, for example, that married men made better workers, and tried to encourage men to bring their wives in to town with them.<sup>1</sup> By 1933 the proportion of married men had reached 40% in the mining towns, and this in turn encouraged longer settlement. Thus on the Roan Antelope mine, where this was a deliberate policy, the average length of stay had increased to something like two years.<sup>2</sup> It cannot however be said that this was a concerted effort to stabilise the urban population. The motives of the mining companies were usually short-term economic gain based on the assumption that stable married men were

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<sup>1</sup> Sklar (1975:100); Robinson (1967:161); Berger (1974:48).

<sup>2</sup> Berger (1974:48).



more productive. On the other hand, the Government was firmly committed to a migrant labour system, a policy that had been formed

by the economic pressures of the depression and from consideration of native policy in a rural rather than an industrial context. Lack of faith in the future of the copper industry, fear of the expenses of large-scale urban administration, devotion to Indirect Rule, and a wish to circulate money in the remote and poor country districts away from the line of rail led the Government to discourage the creation of a large class of settled workers.<sup>1</sup>

The mining companies had no real wish to go against this policy. Their aims were restricted in that they wished only to reduce turnover rates that were too high to be economic, not to bring about a stable urban labour force. In search of the former, however, they were inevitably to hasten the arrival of the latter. As a result, the situation was obviously changing by 1940. Whatever the official policy, a number of senior officials realised that they must start to seriously consider alternatives, for the impact of the copper industry upon urban life and values generally was becoming difficult to ignore.<sup>2</sup>

The urban system was still very much centred on the employed migrant. However, though regulations tried to exclude from town those who did not work, a good proportion of the population - 14% in Broken Hill - came under the vaguely defined categories of 'visitors' and

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:40-41)

<sup>2</sup> As early as 1933, "Dundas remarked: 'It would seem that at this meeting it was clearly recognised that the compound system is bad, that detribalization must be accepted as inevitable.'" Hall (1965:108) .



'unemployed'. The former category, which included those seeking work in town, was restricted by the issue of visitor's permits by the local authority.<sup>1</sup> The latter category, which frequently overlapped with the former, was the most unwelcome and, as far as the authorities were concerned, had no right to be in town, or to have access to the facilities available. Indeed, "it was surmised that the persistently unemployed ... were vagabonds and thieves."<sup>2</sup> The depression had brought about large-scale unemployment and, combined with the cessation of organised recruitment in 1931, had led to there being a constant pool of labour.<sup>3</sup> The problems of pursuing a policy of non-stabilisation were becoming more and more obvious. By attempting to run towns along the lines of Labour Camps, the complexities of urban life and the wide range of needs of an urban population were persistently ignored. The rigid rules and regulations may have been feasible with the small townships of early years, but they became increasingly inappropriate, and impossible to enforce, during the rapid growth of the 1930s. This was particularly so as the emphasis moved away from the servicing of small administrative commun-

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:101) notes that "between 1947 and 1956 there were 94,858 convictions for violations of these pass laws: around 90% ... were for residing in a camp without a visitor's permit."

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:95)

<sup>3</sup> Berger, for example, notes (1974:39) that 20,000 men applied for under 7000 jobs at the Nkana mine in 1935.

ities towards industrial production. A town has its own dynamic. Children are born, individuals develop social relationships, sexual alliances are formed, political groupings emerge. Work is but one aspect of urban life. Even in the mine compounds, it was difficult for the authorities to serve all the needs of the population, and as a result there grew up a whole range of 'fringe' activities that were not catered for by, and did not even come into the calculations of, those who were in power.

As more and more women and children moved into towns; as the unemployed/visitor category grew larger and larger; and as the working population expanded so quickly, the local authorities found themselves unable to meet the demand for housing, and overcrowding became a serious problem.<sup>1</sup> Facilities varied greatly, but were normally much superior on the mining compounds where the companies accepted the provision of basic welfare facilities either as an obligation or as a pre-requisite to a productive work force. Local authorities on the other hand started off from the assumption that the African communities should be self-supporting, a goal which was to be achieved by using profits from the municipal Beer Halls to pay for social services and welfare facilities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:92) notes that in the early 1940s it was estimated that "on average in the urban local authority areas 8.1 persons squeezed into each housing unit and 7.3 persons into each room - from which it may be inferred that only 10.3% of the housing units were made up of more than a single room."

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1958:18)

Water, but not electricity, was generally regarded as a basic facility on most compounds, but sanitary services were highly variable and generally poor.<sup>1</sup> Some attempt was usually made to provide health and educational facilities, but there is a good deal of doubt as to how effective such facilities were.<sup>2</sup> But what is important to note is that, despite the poor quality of many of these facilities, the authorities were beginning to think of the towns within a wider framework. As a result, they began to make different assumptions about what were essential services for urban areas.<sup>3</sup> From the late 1930s onwards, the authorities were forced to think more closely about their urban policy and, in particular, about the role of women, children, old people, unemployed and various other groupings not really catered for, except in a negative manner, under the old ordinances. They were forced to reconsider whether the policy of forcing people to continually migrate between town and village was operational, or even desirable.

It had been crucial to the success of the policy of non-stabilisation that women should be severely restricted in town. The colonial administrators had seen

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:92) notes that: "No piped water to individual houses was available; except at Fort Jameson, latrines were communal and only at Kitwe was there one lavatory seat for as few as twelve persons."

<sup>2</sup> For an extended description of facilities on Ndola's compounds, see Coulter (1967:61-87)

<sup>3</sup> By 1937 the municipal council in Livingstone was even considering the need for a library for Africans.



from the very beginning that the best way to force men to retain their links with the rural areas was to ensure that they retained their obligations there. Though some of the larger firms began to encourage men to bring their wives with them, there were many other things about urban life that effectively discouraged women from leaving the rural areas. The Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Ordinance of 1933 deprived women of legal employment in towns. As it was, very few jobs which could be done by women were available, and there was a constant pool of unemployed men on hand for any vacancies that did occur. Some of the larger industrial concerns went as far as to offer married women partial rations but, as Heisler comments, "when confronted with a choice between sharing cramped urban bachelor quarters with a husband or remaining in a homestead many a wife preferred her homestead."<sup>1</sup> The problem of bringing a wife into town was very much exaggerated if children were also involved. No provision was made by the authorities in terms of rations for children, and the extra food needed had to be paid for out of cash received. Similarly, no

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:123). Wilson (1941:47-48) calculated that on the mine compound in Broken Hill adult men made up 71% of the total population, whereas on the five-acre plots with their increased space and facilities for providing food, they only made up 44.2% of the total. The town location and various small compounds had similar proportions to the five-acre plots (44.4% and 48.8% respectively). The most likely explanation for this is that there were opportunities for women to trade there, and that long-term occupancy of a house was more common because jobs did not always go with housing, particularly in the town location.

extra provision was made in terms of accommodation.

Without a valid marriage certificate, it was technically impossible for a woman to move into the towns, and until 1953 these certificates were only issued in the rural areas. This further restricted the flow of women into urban areas and virtually ensured that, should a man wish to get married, he had to return to his home village in order to do so, thus providing a further long-term commitment to his rural home. Effectively then, women were generally discouraged from moving into town, and married women only tolerated in as much as their presence was seen as contributing to production by reducing turnover.

## 2:5 The Development of Policy

The emergence of copper, and the consequent heavy concentrations of industrial workers, had not been envisaged when the fundamental policy had been laid down. From 1940 onwards, it was evident to virtually everyone that the copper industry was to be a permanent, and very important, feature of Northern Rhodesian society. There was still a reluctance on all sides to view the possibility of a stabilised urban population, and official policy introduced the rather amorphous concept of 'balanced stabilisation' which was defined by the administration as "stabilisation in the rural areas by such means as we are now adopting by encouraging peasant settlements ... and in the urban areas to such a degree as the industry

warrants."<sup>1</sup> But the writing was on the wall once production, and other associated variables such as turnover and the training of a skilled workforce, became critical factors. The changes in attitudes began to be changes in policy with the official recognition in 1945 of the need for married quarters. The Urban African Housing Ordinance of 1948 was an attempt to make local authorities bear more responsibility for housing by obliging them to provide accommodation for all people employed within the municipal boundaries. Large employers, i.e. those with more than twenty-five employees, might be required to provide housing, or alternatively to pay the full rent to the local authority. In this way the ordinance attempted to clear up any ambiguity or confusion as to who exactly was responsible for whom. Under the same ordinance, married quarters were deliberately encouraged, and areas were designed specifically for the accommodation of nuclear families.<sup>2</sup> A Department of Local Government and Housing was set up, and this drew up what was basically a family housing programme that was incorporated into the revised version of the Ten-Year Development Plan.

Also by the mid-1940s, the Administration was beginning to take more note of the unauthorised housing that had appeared both in the Labour Camps and,

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:69)

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:59). Since 1944 the housing standards had laid down that the minimum for a married couple was to be a two-roomed unit.



increasingly, in the peri-urban areas.<sup>1</sup> This normally catered for those groups, - such as the self-employed, the old, and the unemployed - who had no claim against any employer. For such individuals the idea of 'African Townships' was developed. These were to be built near all the major urban centres, and planning began in 1943. Houses were to be built either by the owners themselves according to approved standards, or by the local authority and then distributed appropriately.<sup>2</sup> It was also accepted that such schemes might appeal to a better-paid category of worker who might wish to "avoid the disciplined atmosphere of locations."<sup>3</sup> In fact, similar schemes had been developed previously for this particular group of workers when the Administration had set up "African villages in the vicinity of townships, where clerks, capitalists and traders could lease plots at low rates and build their own houses."<sup>4</sup> This new scheme at last officially acknowledged that there were categories other than 'employed' within the urban population.

These changes represent the phase when Heisler's Labour Camps disappeared and were replaced by what he terms 'Towns for Africans'.<sup>5</sup> Whether it was in reality the beginnings of a policy of permanent urbanization, as

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:117); Waddington (1976:68)

<sup>2</sup> For further details, see Conyngham (1951)

<sup>3</sup> Gann (1964:384)

<sup>4</sup> Gann (1964:302); DPRU, Lusaka (1972:13)

<sup>5</sup> Heisler (1974:85)

Gann suggests, is open to debate.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the old ideas on circulatory migration were disappearing, and a determined effort was being made to stabilise the work force. But employment was still the critical factor around which the policy was based, and to which housing was tied - even if employment was given a less narrow definition. Thus no steps were taken to allow Africans to acquire their own land and housing on the open market.<sup>2</sup> The Government had every intention of retaining a tight control of all available housing. It is therefore very doubtful that the authorities intended to promote permanent urbanization as such. They realised that the individual would spend longer and longer periods in town, and make fewer and fewer trips home, but they were equally certain that he would eventually return to his rural base. By 1951, two-fifths of the men on the Copperbelt had lived for ten years or more in urban areas.<sup>3</sup> I would rather see the policy steps of the 1945-1950 period as a reluctant acceptance of the inevitable, than as a positive commitment on the part of the colonial administration to the process of urbanization. In effect, it was little more than an attempt to regularise what was already happening amongst the urban population, in an effort to control an increasingly complex and chaotic

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<sup>1</sup> Gann (1964:363)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:19). Even at independence, in 1964, only 78 Africans were permanent owner-occupiers.

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1974:15)

situation. The idea that you can bring people together in large numbers in towns to service your needs, yet at the same time ensure that they remain as they were before, was fated from the very beginning. All this is, of course, closely linked to the political framework of the colonial system. Though a number of minor concessions had been made in order to allow some sort of expression of African opinion, there was no intention by 1950 of permitting Africans to gain any sort of political control. Northern Rhodesia was still very much a British Protectorate, and the role of the African population was to provide a supply of labour that would allow the settlers to achieve their goals. It was still essential that the Europeans retained strict control of this population, and this policy of what can best be called 'stabilisation without urbanization' was seen, by both the Administration and the mining companies, as being the most logical next step.

## 2:6 Livingstone

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the first twenty five years of Northern Rhodesian history were dominated by Livingstone. But subsequent discussion has centred on the Copperbelt. This is probably inevitable. By 1969, 62% of the country's total urban population was living on the Copperbelt, and this made up 17% of Zambia's total population.<sup>1</sup> The emergence of copper,

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<sup>1</sup> Jackman (1973:13)



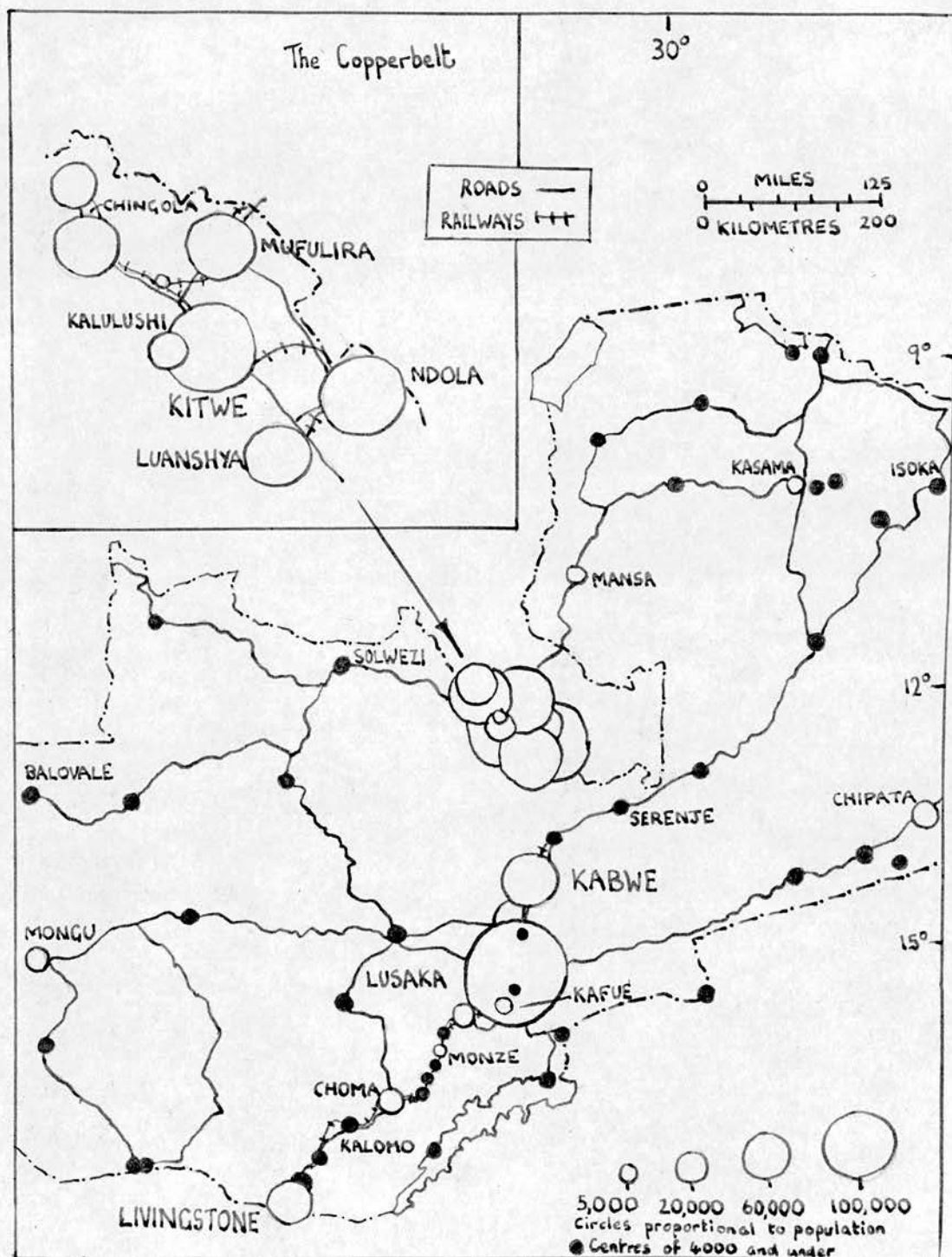
and the movement of the capital to Lusaka had a disastrous effect on Livingstone, virtually halving the population. A number of firms ceased activity in the town and, exaggerated by the depression, the early 1930s were probably the low spot in the town's development.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, the Zambezi Sawmills opened up on a large scale in the years immediately before the Second World War, and within a decade it was to become the country's largest non-mining industrial enterprise.<sup>2</sup> It has also been the source of various ancillary industries around the town, most notably the production of hardboard. The increasingly intensive farming in the Southern Province also helped the town, which became the main tobacco-grading centre for the whole country. As was to happen in many parts of Central Africa, the Second World War provided a boost for secondary industry and, by 1950, the town found itself expanding again. In the twenty year period between 1931 and 1951, the European population of the town expanded from 1596 to 2316, and the employed African population had more than doubled, from 4786 to 9610. When McCulloch carried out her survey in 1952, she estimated the total population to be in the region of

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<sup>1</sup> Gann (1964:254) notes that in 1933 the Livingstone Mail was forced to call for soup kitchens to be set up in order to feed the "thousands of unemployed in the Maramba Compound."

<sup>2</sup> The firm, drawing its timber from the teak forests of the North-West, produces timber and furniture both for the home market and for export.

MAP 2: URBAN ZAMBIA



Source: Based on Davies (1971:81)

21,000.<sup>1</sup> Livingstone had, therefore, also experienced a sudden upsurge in population, if on a less dramatic scale than the Copperbelt towns. But, in the absence of the type of housing provided by the large mining companies, the town appears to have had even greater problems with the accommodation of its African population.

A number of rules and regulations were introduced over the years which attempted to rigorously control all African housing. Under the 1927 Municipal Corporations Ordinance, these were incorporated as the Livingstone Native Location Bye-Laws<sup>2</sup> and included the following:

4. It shall be lawful for the Municipality to lease lots in the location where natives may erect their own huts or dwelling houses.
8. The Location Superintendent shall record in a book every complaint made to him by any native residing in the location.
13. It shall be lawful for the Municipality to limit the number of persons resident in any rented house, hut or room in municipal quarters.
15. It shall not be lawful for the registered occupier to sub-let the said quarters or any part thereof except with the permission of the Location Superintendent.
18. It shall be lawful for the Municipality to limit the number of outbuildings and buildings on any plot and to limit the number of persons resident on such plot and the number of residents in any building on such plot.
23. It shall not be lawful for the occupier of a plot to sell or lease any building or out-building on such plot except with the written permission of the Location Superintendent.

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:1)

<sup>2</sup> Government Gazette 1931, Volume 21, p.349.



Obviously, very careful provisions were made to ensure that a tight hold was kept on what was going on in the town's compounds.<sup>1</sup> Outside of the mining compounds, urban housing was generally described as being in "a deplorable and chaotic state."<sup>2</sup> In Livingstone it appears to have been even worse than normal and it was generally agreed that, on the whole, housing conditions had lagged behind those of other centres on the line of rail.<sup>3</sup> We shall see in later chapters that there were a number of peculiarities in Livingstone's housing system, but the general story was the same as elsewhere. It was perhaps worse because all the working population was outside the framework provided by the mining companies, and an even larger number of individuals than normal were not, until 1948 at least, catered for by the various ordinances.

Livingstone was subject to the same policies, ordinances, and regulations as other urban areas in Northern Rhodesia. Because its employment structure was very different from either the mining towns or the capital, there were a number of unusual features, includ-

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<sup>1</sup> The poorly paid Location Superintendents, who were "expected to 'make bricks without straw'" [Gann (1964:298)] were the watchdogs of all this. A popular story told by some of Malota's older inhabitants was of the 'compound manager' who sometime during the 1940s, committed suicide in a spectacular manner by riding his bicycle over the Victoria Falls. It was generally believed that he had done this either because the job had driven him insane, or because he had been misappropriating funds.

<sup>2</sup> Native Affairs 1937, p.48

<sup>3</sup> Native Affairs 1960, p.73

ing Malota compound which forms the focus of this study. But such peculiarities can be found in any of the urban areas. Emerging from a set of general economic and political factors, the towns develop a cluster of unique characteristics based on local and historical factors. Livingstone's relatively long history; its early focus as an administrative centre; its later dependence on agriculture and secondary industry; all make it a very different phenomenon from Lusaka, the Copperbelt towns, or Broken Hill, despite the strong common influences to which all of these towns have been subjected by virtue of being based within the same political unit.

## CHAPTER 3

### URBAN ZAMBIA: 1951 - 1971

#### 3:1 Introduction

This chapter is focused on two major factors. Firstly, the developments that occurred as a result of the changes in attitudes towards urban stabilisation in the 1940s. Secondly, the major economic and political changes brought about by the move towards, and the achievement of, independence. The most obvious measure of the effect of these factors has been the significant increase in the number of urban dwellers such that, by 1969, almost 30% of Zambia's total population were living in urban areas. This, in turn, has had important effects on the overall quality of urban life. This particular phase of urban development in Zambia has been fairly extensively studied by social scientists. A number of surveys were carried out of Northern Rhodesian towns during the 1950s which show how effective (or otherwise) was the policy of stabilisation.<sup>1</sup> The political changes leading to, and resulting from, independence have been

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<sup>1</sup> Armor (1958); Bettison (1959); McCulloch (1956); Mitchell (1954).



exhaustively covered,<sup>1</sup> and give a great deal of insight into the relationship between urban development and the whole question of self-government. More recently, there has been a good deal of literature on the emergence of squatter areas around the country's towns and cities.<sup>2</sup> Such studies will be used in an attempt to show, not only that there are more urban Zambians, but also that there have been substantive changes in the nature of Zambian towns.

### 3:2 The Stabilisation of the Urban Population

'Stabilisation' is basically a demographic term which "is significant only against the background of labour migration. A population becomes stabilised in town when people no longer make intermittent journeys back to their rural homes."<sup>3</sup> The concern of the colonial Administration was to achieve somehow a certain level of stabilisation, a necessary adjunct to their administrative and economic goals, without bringing about major changes in the behavioural patterns of the African population. They wished, in effect, for the worker (despite all his new experiences) to remain - socially, culturally, and politically - much as he was, i.e. essentially rural. But in this they made the crucial mistake of

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958); Tordoff (1974); Pettman (1974).

<sup>2</sup> Collins (1973); Boswell (1975); Seymour (1976); Van Velsen (1975).

<sup>3</sup> Mitchell (1956b:695).

viewing 'urbanization' and 'change' as one and the same thing. To them the major change going on in the country at the time was the development of new towns and cities, and as such it was the towns and cities that were bringing about the other changes - industry, transport, education and so on. They thus viewed the town as the primary innovator and generator of change. In contrast, they saw the rural areas as static and unchanging. The error lay in not realising that the changes brought about by the introduction of a colonial administration and a capitalist economy were effective, to a varying degree, throughout the society. Thus the rural areas were also subject to changes, becoming bound up economically (as both consumer and producer) with the towns, and, through the process of labour migration, being subjected to new behavioural and ideological influences. It is in this sense that Little argues that "it is not from the town but from the system encompassing it that vitality, force and impetus come."<sup>1</sup> As a result, attempts to restrict persistent and permanent access to urban areas (which was the underlying assumption even in a policy of 'balanced stabilisation') will not necessarily prevent a commitment on the part of individuals to the values, beliefs and behavioural patterns that are so prevalent in towns. In very general terms, a man does not have to live all his life in towns to become 'urbanized', and therefore a policy of preventing him from staying permanently in town

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<sup>1</sup> Little (1974:103).

can also never guarantee to prevent him from becoming 'urban'.

The studies of the towns of Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s<sup>1</sup> show that circulatory migration was still an important factor, though it was also apparent that a variety of changes were taking place. The number of women who now lived with their husband was increasing; the sex ratio was more equable; the average size of the family household was greater; and the number of older people was mounting.<sup>2</sup> Such measures reflect a high level of stabilisation which Kapferer attempted to quantify in his 1964 study of Broken Hill. Using as his indices of stabilisation, "length of continuous residence in Broken Hill, period spent away from a rural area, the percentage of working life after the age of 15 spent in town and, finally, the current attitudes people have towards remaining in town or returning to their rural home", he was able to conclude that the Broken Hill figures differed substantially from similar data collected by Mitchell eleven years earlier.<sup>3</sup> Thus Mitchell in 1953 had found 55.5% of the population to be 'labour migrants'; in 1964 this figure was only 23.4%. The 'temporarily stabilised' group had grown from 37.9% to 59.6%, and the 'permanently

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<sup>1</sup> Particularly McCulloch (1956) and Mitchell (1954)

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:60)

<sup>3</sup> Kapferer (1966:47)



stabilised' group had nearly trebled from 6.6% to 17.1%.<sup>1</sup> Such data shows very clearly that, in the decade before independence, the pattern of migration between Zambia's urban and rural areas had altered significantly. The housing policy, however, still remained very much opposed to the permanent stabilisation of the workforce for, by perpetuating 'institutional' housing which was tied to employment, it retained the underlying assumption that workers should eventually retire to their rural homes.<sup>2</sup>

Built into the new policy was the commitment to provide all urban workers with some form of housing. This was something the authorities had not been able to do in the past and, ironically, their new policy only exaggerated the problem. In the years between 1951 and 1962, the urban population was, once again, to double reaching an estimated figure of over half-a-million.<sup>3</sup> There was no longer a concerted effort to prevent women from coming into town and, as Heisler points out, "family housing units did not merely bring women and children to towns to join husbands. Once there they helped commit a worker to town life."<sup>4</sup> Despite a very heavy building programme, it

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<sup>1</sup> According to Kapferer (1966:53), labour migrants have "no intention of staying in town longer than is necessary"; the temporarily stabilised are "staying on in town but will eventually go home"; and the permanently stabilised "have no intention of returning home". These figures relate only to adult males.

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:61)

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1974:133)

<sup>4</sup> Heisler (1974:119)

was inevitable that the authorities would not be able to cope. But the very nature of the policy excluded other forms of accommodation such as private housing, unauthorised settlements, and - except in a very few cases - areas of land on which workers could build their own homes. Though any of these could have helped to alleviate the problem, they were regarded as the sort of housing that would encourage, and permit, attitudes of permanency. As such, they were to be discouraged. In effect, then, the policy loosened control on patterns of migrancy (leading to further, rapid urban expansion), but tried to retain a tight control on the type of housing available.

### 3:3 The Urban Housing Market

During the 1950s the emphasis was placed on building permanent housing on municipal locations. A concerted effort was made to rid the urban areas of temporary and semi-permanent structures.<sup>1</sup> Livingstone's housing structure was somewhat unusual in that it emphasised self-built housing and employers' compounds, with fewer domestics and virtually no unauthorised housing. As a result, there were fewer people than usual living in municipal housing, though the figure still

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<sup>1</sup> Bettison's study of Lusaka [Bettison (1959) quoted in Seymour (1976:28-29)] showed that 49% of the population were living in accommodation supplied by the Municipal Council; 19% in employers' compounds in non-African parts of the city; 14% in similar compounds in other areas; 5% in authorised self-built housing; and the remainder in a number of unauthorised compounds. The Africans living in non-African areas were mainly domestic servants.

constituted approximately 40% of the total African population.<sup>1</sup> On the Copperbelt, mining townships inevitably continued to dominate with as much as 68% (in Mufulira) and as little as 47% (in Kitwe) of the African population residing in them.<sup>2</sup> However, in 1959 the Municipalities of Kitwe, Luanshya, Mufulira and Chingola started work on a scheme that would lead to the taking over of the mine townships and their facilities by the municipal authorities.<sup>3</sup> The trend then was, even on the Copperbelt, to make all housing the responsibility of local urban authorities, even if the traditional segregation between the employees of the large companies and other urban residents was maintained. It was also apparent in the years prior to independence that the idea of African Townships had not been at all successful.<sup>4</sup> The blame for this was placed on the fact that they were normally some distance from the main urban area,<sup>5</sup> and transportation charges to work were therefore high. In no case did more than 5% of a town's population live in one of these adjacent townships, which means that many of the people for whom they were intended were living else-

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:7)

<sup>2</sup> Kay (1967:95)

<sup>3</sup> Barclays Bank Overseas Survey, (1960:90)

<sup>4</sup> Kay (1967:92) provides figures which show that on the Copperbelt rates of occupation of available stands went as low as 6% (for Kasombe in Chingola) with a maximum of only 38% (for Chibuluma in Kitwe).

<sup>5</sup> Fisenge, for example, was four miles out of Luanshya.



where. The expansion of municipal compound housing during the 1950s seems to me to be the most likely explanation for their failure, for the Townships were originally set up to cater for those individuals who had no employer to provide them with housing. The new municipal compounds were also able to serve this function.<sup>1</sup>

Despite central government financing, the urban housing stock in the years prior to independence became increasingly inadequate for the large numbers of people now flowing into the towns. Too large a proportion of the resources were consumed in trying to improve upon the deplorable standards of the previous two decades, and to provide superior housing for those who were already there. This was a perfectly legitimate goal, and might well have been achieved if the population had remained constant or increased only at a slow rate. This was not the case and, though some improvements were made and general standards rose, the authorities were unable to cope with the numbers of people now in need of accommodation.<sup>2</sup> To add to the problem, the amount of money made available for municipal housing declined considerably in the years immediately before independence, possibly because of political

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<sup>1</sup> Indirectly connected with this was the increasing number of people who, during the 1950s, chose to pay their own rent rather than having it paid by their employer. By doing this, they were saved from eviction should they lose their jobs. McCulloch (1956:5) calculated that one in five men on Livingstone's largest compounds were doing this.

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:49) comments that improvements in the towns, resulting in improved health standards, acted as a 'positive inducement' to migrants, thus exaggerating the problem even further.

uncertainty.<sup>1</sup> Inevitably, this was the sort of situation in which unauthorised housing and squatter settlements might be expected to thrive. However, there was a determined effort to at least contain, if not prevent, any such developments. This was generally successful within urban boundaries, and even in the peri-urban area of Lusaka the growth rate for unauthorised housing was kept down to 5% per annum - a figure lower than the general growth rate for the city.<sup>2</sup> But such housing was undoubtedly very attractive to many migrants because of the lower rents, and also the fact that it was not normally attached to a particular employer or job.

### 3:4 The Urban Population

The average house, made of sun-dried brick, plastered and lime-washed outside and inside, with concrete floor and corrugated iron roof, had two rooms. Each room usually had one window, and there was a bed, a table, a few chairs, an oil lamp, perhaps a battery radio, a few dishes and cooking utensils, and a wire bin to protect food from insects. A picture of Queen Elizabeth was likely to be on the wall .... The orderly rows of white houses and the lack of trees and flowers seemed to me to lack a pleasing esthetic quality. But the Africans thought the houses a great improvement over their traditional village homes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Barclays Bank Overseas Survey, (1963:82) comments: "The value of building plans passed by municipalities and in peri-urban areas continued to fall ... total plans passed were valued at £1,864,000 compared with £2,915,000 during the same period of the previous year and £4,032,000 during the whole of 1961." Stren (1975: 267) notes a similar pattern in Kenya.

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:5)

<sup>3</sup> Powdermaker (1962:5)

Hortense Powdermaker's study of life on the Luanshya mine compound in the mid-1950s concentrates on the rapid changes being experienced by the population, and suggests that this period brought about some major improvements - social, economic, and political - for the urban African worker. Some of the towns must certainly have been unrecognizable to someone who had not visited them for twenty years. Towns like Chingola and Ndola grew to be almost seven times larger, in terms of population, between 1944 and 1963.<sup>1</sup> Copper remained the base of the country's economy, and in the period 1954-1961 was the source of 46.5% of the Gross Domestic Product.<sup>2</sup> In terms of employment, however, its impact was less considerable.<sup>3</sup> But generally many more people were becoming involved in the wage-earning sector. Figures from Heisler suggest, however, that although the number of African wage-earners in the country increased by 69% in the period 1946-1961, the number of Africans in town increased by an enormous 242%.<sup>4</sup> The implication of this, of course, is that by

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:16)

<sup>2</sup> Baldwin (1966:35). This average actually hides quite significant variations. The 1955 figure reached a peak of 56.8%, and three years later it had dropped to only 32.6%.

<sup>3</sup> Baldwin (1966:43) shows that Mining and quarrying generally was responsible for 15.9% of the total wage-earners; a figure exceeded by agriculture (16.9%) and closely followed by a rapidly expanding building and construction industry (12.6%). Kay (1967:69) suggests that, at that point in time, the building and construction industry was going through a major depression and that, during the 1950s, it was the most important employer of labour.

<sup>4</sup> Heisler (1974:132)



independence many people must have been either unemployed or self-employed.<sup>1</sup> The problem of urban unemployment became increasingly important after the mid-1950s. Census figures show that, by 1963, 27,500 men were 'actively seeking work' in town, a total of 18% of the actual urban labour force.<sup>2</sup> Inevitably, the problem was greatest on the Copperbelt where, for example, in 1961 there were twenty men applying for each vacancy at the Roan Antelope mine.<sup>3</sup> Much of the problem has been attributed to significant increases in wage levels during this period.<sup>4</sup> Just how great these were is shown by the fact that, while African real earnings actually decreased by 21% in the period 1930-45, they increased an enormous 300% in the next fifteen years.<sup>5</sup> Increases were greatest in the copper industry where the trade union became an increasingly effective force, and where earnings were related to a cost-of-living index after 1950. But large increases were recorded in most sectors (see Table 3:1).

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<sup>1</sup> The figure of 242% includes women and children who would not normally seek wage-employment. But, equally, only 60% of the wage-earners were in town [Kay (1967:70)], so the general point - of a gap between jobs and applicants - remains.

<sup>2</sup> Kay (1967:70)

<sup>3</sup> Baldwin (1966:105). Berger (1974:209) quotes the African Personnel Manager at Nchanga mine as saying that there were, in 1960, "well over one thousand (increasing daily) chasing 20-30 jobs (the majority hungry, frustrated and penniless)."

<sup>4</sup> Berger (1974:210); Baldwin (1966:119-20)

<sup>5</sup> Baldwin (1966:97)

TABLE 3:1

**AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF AFRICAN EMPLOYEES  
BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR: 1954 - 1964**

	Average Annual Earnings (£)		Per- centage Increase
	1954	1964	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	41	88	115
Mining and Quarrying	132	367	178
Manufacturing	76	203	167
Construction	74	153	107
Commerce	73	194	166
Transport and Communications	86	241	180
Services	77	196	157
Domestic Service	56	98	75
ALL EMPLOYEES	78	191	145

Source: Derived from Kay(1967:71)

Pay rises, of course, are likely to increase the flow of people into town, particularly if they further widen the gap between urban and rural wage levels. But, on the other hand, they are likely to reduce the available job opportunities in terms of numbers because they increase an employer's costs. Thus improved wage levels can have a deleterious effect on urban life generally by increasing the demand for work, whilst simultaneously reducing the

supply of jobs.<sup>1</sup> A migrant must then balance the possibility of gaining a well-paid job in town against the possibility of joining the ever-increasing ranks of the urban unemployed.

However there can be no doubt that, for those people who did have jobs, and particularly for those who were working on the mines, things were greatly improved. This was reflected in major changes in rates of turnover, and a general trend towards a higher level of stabilisation of the workforce. Thus the annual turnover rate of Africans working on Copperbelt mines was reduced from 60.1% in 1952 to only 8.3% at independence.<sup>2</sup> This meant that more people were staying in town for longer periods of time.<sup>3</sup> This was virtually a universal conclusion in all the studies at that time, though there were variations between different age groups, different compounds, and different towns.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kay (1967:69) points out that the total workforce decreased from a peak figure of 271,000 in 1954 to only 225,000 in 1963. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between wages, unemployment, and migration, see Harris & Todaro (1970).

<sup>2</sup> Berger (1974:208)

<sup>3</sup> For example, Sklar (1975:131) has calculated that by 1961 the average length of service of all African mine-workers was 5.6 years.

<sup>4</sup> Mitchell (1954:17) found a much higher level of 'permanent urbanisation' on municipal townships than on mine locations. Bettison (1959:78) found a similar difference between municipal and industrial locations in Lusaka, and also noticed significant differences in length of period spent in town by different age groups.



### 3:5 The Effect of Independence

During the 1960s two censuses were carried out in Zambia; one just before independence in 1963, and the other in 1969. In this period of time, the total population of the country increased from just under three-and-a-half million to over four million, at a rate of growth of 2.5% per annum. In 1963 urban dwellers comprised about 20% of the total African population; six years later this figure was almost 30%.<sup>1</sup> In percentage terms this represents a very rapid rate of growth, but when we consider it in terms of actual numbers the full significance becomes evident. It meant, in effect, that during the 1960s almost half-a-million more people moved into the towns.<sup>2</sup> A number of factors associated with independence were responsible, in part at least, for this dramatic increase.

In itself, the achievement of independence was a substantial stimulus. In the fight for freedom from colonial rule, many promises and many predictions had been made, and in the years after 1964 people were impatient for results. The towns were the places where changes were most noticeable, and where the effects of self-government would first be registered. It was to the towns, therefore, that people flocked to gain access to the rewards of independence; to become part of a new and very different Zambia.

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<sup>1</sup> Census of Population and Housing 1969, First Report, pp. A6,A8

<sup>2</sup> Jackman (1973:12)

The attitude of the new government towards the urban population had, of course, to be radically different from that of its colonial predecessors. No longer could the towns be seen as a separate part of the country, with the African population merely there as a source of labour necessary for the achievement of European goals. The urban areas were now to be run by Zambians for the good of Zambians.<sup>1</sup> Though, for the time being, control of economic resources was to remain largely outside of Zambian administrative control - the making of policy - was firmly in the hands of Zambians. This was to have a radical effect on the housing situation.

One of the first things to happen was that many laws and municipal bye-laws were revoked because of their discriminatory nature. For example, the concept of the 'African Housing Area' contained within the 1948 ordinance was, obviously, no longer supportable. Africans must have access to all housing, if they could afford it. Nor could there be any question of Africans being expected to return to the rural areas either if they were unemployed or if they retired. Towns were places for people to live, not just work. Such ideas were built into the very notion of self-government.

Though such ideas may have unfortunate - though frequently predictable - consequences, they cannot be

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that colonial values disappeared overnight. Van Velsen (1975:307), for example, comments on the antagonism of trade unionists and politicians to migrants.

denied. A country breaking away from colonialism is obliged to show its own population, and the outside world, that it is substantively different from its predecessors. The same problem was to crop up with the question of employment in urban areas. Rural development was an obvious priority, and the government was aware of this. Thus President Kaunda stated in 1967 that: "The objective is to make the agricultural sector as productive and profitable as the mining industry - only more permanent."<sup>1</sup> A year later, he was even more specific about the relationship between rural and urban life in an independent Zambia when he said that "Humanism in Zambia is a decision in favour of rural areas."<sup>2</sup> But how successful have the Zambians been in carrying out this policy? One problem has been that there have been equally strong demands to increase the level of urban employment, and also to bring wages to a higher level. As Berger reports:

The Government naturally supported higher wages in reaction to the dual wage system which had held African wages down and was closely connected with colonialism. Higher wages seemed to urban workers to be a legitimate reward of self-government, and political leaders could scarcely deny this in the heady years after Independence.<sup>3</sup>

One of the objectives of the First National Development Plan was to provide a further 100,000 jobs over a four

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<sup>1</sup> Kaunda (1969a:24)

<sup>2</sup> Kaunda (1969b:42)

<sup>3</sup> Berger (1974:218)



year period.<sup>1</sup> But, as a 1964 United Nations report pointed out: "There is really a choice for Zambia: in the next 5 years it can have big increases in wages or big increases in employment, not both."<sup>2</sup> The political demands of independence meant that, originally at least, such advice was ignored.<sup>3</sup> But the vital importance of restricting wage increases was soon realised and by 1966 the official policy had become centred on "increases in real wages and salaries not greater than five per cent per annum for the low income group and three per cent per annum for the high income group."<sup>4</sup> Despite this, the gap between urban and rural incomes increased considerably in the years after independence.<sup>5</sup> As a result,

such lack of opportunity in the rural areas has increasingly gained recognition among villagers and, not surprisingly, they have voted with their feet by migrating to a new (though often disappointing) life in the urban shanties.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quinn (1969:152)

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Berger (1974:219)

<sup>3</sup> Thus in 1964 earnings increased by an average of 19.4% and the number of jobs by only 13,000 whereas "there would have been a possible increase of 49,800 jobs if the increase in average earnings had been limited to the increase in productivity, say about three per cent." [Quinn (1969:152)]

<sup>4</sup> First National Development Plan (1966:7)

<sup>5</sup> Heisler (1974:111) provides figures of per capita income for urban areas of £90 in 1969 (compared with £43 in 1964); and for peasant farmers of around £13 (compared with £12 in 1964). Berger (1974:225) points out that the average earnings of African wage-earners outside of the mines was over four times that of the average peasant farmer, though only half that of the African mine worker.

<sup>6</sup> Rothchild (1972:224)

But it is not only men in search of work who have brought about this upsurge in the urban population. Higher wage levels and less restrictive housing policies have made it easier, by previous standards, for a man to bring his wife and family into town. A large percentage of the migrants arriving in town for the first time in the period between 1963 and 1969 were women. Seymour has estimated that the "extra migration of women and their children during this period probably had the effect of temporarily increasing the rate of urbanisation by 5% per annum."<sup>1</sup> This had the effect of reducing the sex ratio in towns from 179 males/100 females in 1963 to a figure of 111 in 1969.<sup>2</sup> Related to this was an upsurge of wage-earning women who nearly quadrupled in the same six-year period.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of providing work for this dramatically increased population was only one of the dilemmas thrown up by the achievement of independence. Even more serious, in some respects, was the question of how to cope with housing half-a-million extra people. Two major developments were to occur as a reaction to this situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:34)

<sup>2</sup> The 1963 figure is taken from Kay (1967:81); the 1969 figure from the 1969 Census, p. A10.

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1974:33)

### 3:6 Self-Help Housing

In 1951 it was stated that:

Local authorities are willing to accept in principle the need to provide areas where Africans can build their own houses to approved standards, possibly with money lent by the authority; but somehow when it comes to providing the actual site and laying down the conditions little progress is made.<sup>1</sup>

This sort of scheme was a development of the self-built employers' compounds that were to be found around some of the towns, and which were specifically encouraged by the 1948 Municipal Ordinance. A small number of house-ownership schemes had been attempted which showed the attractive possibility of placing the capital costs on the occupier, even over a twenty five year period.<sup>2</sup>

Before there was any sort of national policy, the government developed a few areas such as Napoloto and Old Chibolya in Lusaka. However, such schemes were developed on an ad hoc basis, often as temporary resettlement schemes, and were not very successful, at least in their early years.<sup>3</sup> Only minimal facilities were provided, and no financial assistance was given. The lack of enthusiasm on the part of the authorities in the pre-independence era was almost certainly because they were seen as encouraging individuals to take up permanent residence in town. But as the housing shortage became increasingly

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1951, p.83

<sup>2</sup> Two schemes in Ndola, involving 76 stands, were set up. The houses cost, in 1957, between £452 and £916. There was a 5% down payment and monthly payments over 25 years.

<sup>3</sup> Development and Planning Research Unit, Lusaka (1972:70)



acute after independence, it began to be apparent that self-help housing could provide a useful long-term solution. The basic idea was taken one step further with the introduction, in 1965, of the 'Aided Self-Help' housing programme into the official housing policy. This specified that all local authorities should have plots made available and serviced by early 1967. As this was to become the main focus of the official housing policy in the period 1965-1971, it is worth noting some of the main points. The objectives were given as:

To build large numbers of houses for owner occupation using the labour of the occupant and his family.

To obtain the cooperation and participation of the people.

To encourage building by the provision of serviced sites, technical and other advice, and loans for building materials.

To encourage building also by cooperation with people and groups locally, and by the introduction of a simple and acceptable form of land tenure.

To keep costs down to a level which could be afforded by the majority in the lowest income brackets.

Selection of people entitled to take part in such schemes, known as Site-and-Service housing, was based on a number of practical considerations. The participant must already be on the council's waiting list; be earning at least K20 and have K20 cash to buy building materials; and be prepared to work with at least half-a-dozen other people for a minimum of eight hours a week. The services provided by the local authorities were to include graded and gravelled roads, piped water to each plot, and some form

of sanitation. Occupants would have a ten-year lease which could be renewed, and were entitled to sell their plots if no money was owed to the Council. Failure to pay loan charges or services could mean eviction, as could sub-letting or failure to complete the house.<sup>1</sup>

The United Nations mission of 1965-66 advised that something in the region of 30% of new housing should be made up of serviced plots, but this figure was increased to 75% in the First National Development Plan of 1966. For a number of reasons, both general and local, it has been difficult to put these schemes into practice,<sup>2</sup> and in 1967, for example, only 20% of intended site-and-service houses were actually completed. But the 1968-72 housing programme still planned that three-quarters of new housing should be of this sort.<sup>3</sup> In the late 1960s, the schemes were essentially experimental with various

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<sup>1</sup> Development and Planning Research Unit, Lusaka (1972:70)

<sup>2</sup> With reference to the Kaunda Square scheme in Lusaka, the Development Planning and Research Unit report makes the following, fairly typical, conclusions:

Various reasons were advanced to account for the slow development:

- lack of education, social and commercial facilities ... dislike of the small plots and low standard ablution blocks. The validity of this reason is suspect because of absence of facilities, large plots and high standards in the unauthorised areas from which people were to be resettled.
- resentment of the tendency to label the area as a 'squatter resettlement scheme'.
- A possibility that the loan is inadequate, resulting in families taking a long time to save money to complete their houses.
- The unnecessarily complicated and drawn out procedures involved in obtaining a plot and building a house.

<sup>3</sup> Seymour (1976:41)

ideas being tried out, and a whole range of problems being encountered. Inevitably, mistakes were made and development was slow.<sup>1</sup> But 'Aided Self-Help' housing is still seen as a crucial element in the transition from the colonial housing structure to something more appropriate to an independent Zambia. It acknowledges the right of all men to own their house, and does not automatically assume that a man's stay in town is temporary. However, it does not totally reject the relationship between occupancy and employment because of the financial pre-requisites that are laid down. It would probably be argued that this is because of technical factors, rather than ideological assumptions; a man needs to be regularly earning money if he is to take on a financial commitment of this nature. But the effect is the same and those who are not working, or do not have long-term job security, are likely to be excluded from such schemes. So, though it is undoubtedly an improvement in principle on colonial housing policy, the adoption of site-and-service schemes as the linch-pin of the housing programme may not be the radical breakthrough it has sometimes been made out to be. It has left many people still not catered for, and would have done so even if it had been carried out in the quantities intended. As a result, many urban dwellers must look elsewhere for their accommodation.

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the problems encountered with similar schemes in Kenya and Tanzania, see Stren (1975:269-70)



### 3:7 Unauthorised Housing and Squatter Settlements

Unauthorised compounds in Northern Rhodesia were compounds that had grown up with the consent of the landlord, but which were illegal because they broke the various laws and municipal regulations relating to urban settlement. Superficially, squatters are a very different phenomenon because they normally also involve illegality of tenure. Unauthorised housing had a number of attractions in the pre-independence era because very often, unlike municipal housing, it was not attached to employment and therefore allowed migrants to remain in town when they were unemployed, self-employed, or even retired. Their presence, therefore, allowed and probably encouraged the permanent stabilisation of certain sectors of the population. These unauthorised compounds were almost all to become squatter compounds in the years after independence, when the population stopped paying rent to the landlords. These landlords were normally European and Asian, and in their drastically weakened post-independence position, with squatting being promoted by the political parties, they were unable to make any effective resistance to such moves. Squatting had previously been strictly controlled, and what little there was had taken place within the confines of the unauthorised compounds.

Employers had not been very conscientious in the years before independence in controlling housing on their own compounds. McCulloch noted in Livingstone, for example, "a number of employer's compounds, small, semi-

legal, and frequently unsalubrious."<sup>1</sup> With the arrival of independence, they were to give up virtually any control at all, thus providing an obvious base for further squatter development.

Finally, the vastly increased urban population meant that the area of land needed for housing had to be expanded, and many squatters were to settle on previously unoccupied areas, particularly in the peri-urban sections surrounding the cities.<sup>2</sup> The squatter compounds grew so rapidly that, by the turn of the decade, about 40% of the total population of Lusaka - almost 100,000 people - was living in such areas.<sup>3</sup>

We can see then that post-independence policy has been no more successful in coping with urban housing shortages than its colonial predecessors. The rapidly increasing influx, exaggerated by the discarding of various control regulations, has led to a demand for housing that has never been remotely met by the official supply. This has not been helped by a tendency to have used the available resources disproportionately for

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:4)

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:53)

<sup>3</sup> Seymour (1976:5) shows that the growth rate of squatter areas in the capital in the period 1963-69 was a phenomenal 32.5% per annum (compared with an overall rate for the city of 13.4%) and, though this was reduced subsequently, the gap between the two rates has remained significant.

middle-level housing.<sup>1</sup> The realisation of this inability to meet the demand brought into the limelight the idea of aided self-help housing which, by its very nature, tends to exclude a large number of people, often the ones most in need of housing. The consequence was the rise of squatter compounds which provided the flexibility, as well as the quantity, that rapidly expanding urban areas must have.

This then was the general situation in Zambia at the time of this study. Using the general framework presented in the last two chapters - in which I have particularly concentrated on the relationship between official policy, migrancy, employment and housing - I wish to look at the question of urban development in more detail by considering a particular compound that has the peculiar distinction of bridging virtually the whole historical period with which I have been dealing. It was probably the first compound to be built in Northern Rhodesia, and is by far the longest lasting. Yet it also has a very modern aspect in that it has, in recent years, come to be regarded as a squatter compound. By studying the growth and development of this compound, particularly during the period 1951 - 1971, I hope to throw more light on the general process of urbanization in Zambia.

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:39) points out that in the period 1966-70, for example, twice as much money was spent on civil service housing as on low-cost housing schemes.



## CHAPTER 4

### MALOTA COMPOUND

#### 4:1 Introduction

As we saw in an earlier chapter, Livingstone's decline of the 1930s was halted and the post-World War II era saw some expansion. In less than twenty years the population doubled from about 21,000 in 1952 to 43,000 in 1969.<sup>1</sup> However, compared with other Zambian towns, this is not as impressive as it might appear. The town's growth rate between 1963 and 1969 was 31.5%, the second lowest of all Zambia's towns.<sup>2</sup> There is a good deal of doubt as to the town's future and many would agree with McGlashan's comment that "it owes much to byegone days .... Of all the large towns of Zambia, perhaps Livingstone has the least prospect for growth."<sup>3</sup> There is a certain irony when we look to why this situation should have arisen. The very factor that made it an important town in the first place - its position on the Zambezi border - has now become a problem. With the breakdown of

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<sup>1</sup> Jackman (1973:12)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Luanshya had the lowest rate.

<sup>3</sup> McGlashan (1971:108)

the Central African Federation in the early 1960s, Zambian independence, and the deterioration of the relations between Rhodesia and Zambia after the former's Unilateral Declaration of Independence, the town's proximity to Rhodesia is no longer a positive stimulus to growth. Indeed, it may well have been a negative factor. This has certainly been the case with the tourist industry which, centred on the Victoria Falls, was deliberately developed in the 1950s, and became the mainstay of the local economy. An extensive hotel and curio trade was developed, but this has been drastically affected by the drop in the number of tourists, from 52,000 in 1962 to only 12,000 in 1967.<sup>1</sup> Attempts to compensate for this by introducing manufacturing industry to the town have not been as successful as was hoped, though this can probably be attributed to the dominance of Lusaka, Kitwe and Ndola as centres of industrial growth, rather than Livingstone's position. A number of new industries have been introduced,<sup>2</sup> and the long established textile and clothing industry has seen some expansion (being responsible, in 1969, for almost 60% of the town's manufacturing establishments). But, despite the decision in 1969 to open a

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<sup>1</sup> McGlashan (1971:108)

<sup>2</sup> A biscuit factory was opened in 1963 and a factory producing radios and record players in 1965. In 1969 the town had six establishments dealing with food products; one with beverages and tobacco; twenty-one with textiles, clothing and footwear; four with timber and furniture; one with paper and printing; one with non-metallic mineral products; and two with metals and engineering.

large Fiat vehicle assembly plant, the town's economic future remains bleak, and it will probably remain so until political developments restore Zambia's links with its Southern neighbours. Livingstone's population is very much aware of this state of affairs, and their concern is reflected in a vigorous campaign to have the status of the town raised to that of a city. Such a move had gained a good deal of support and momentum in the years after independence, to the extent that the District Governor, the government's political representative in the Southern Province, was forced to conclude in a speech made at the 1971 Labour Day rally that "it is obvious that we must move towards city status in the very near future."

#### 4:2 Housing in Livingstone

Livingstone was no better, probably even worse, than other Northern Rhodesian towns when it came to coping with the housing needs of the African population. By 1951, however, it was claimed that the authorities had been able to demolish the "last of the Unauthorised aggregations of hovels on the periphery of the town."<sup>1</sup> The following year, McCulloch recorded a total of twenty compounds with a population of nearly 16,000. Of this total, 56% were living in three municipal compounds known as Maramba, Libuyu and Malota. There were two large employers' compounds belonging to the Zambezi Sawmills Ltd. (with a population of 1750), and the railways (with

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs, 1951, p.75



a population of 1340). There were five compounds attached to smaller industrial firms in the town, plus separate locations for such groups of workers as Police, Boma messengers, and sanitary workers. All told, these fifteen smaller compounds housed less than 4,000 people. The general policy of the stabilisation of the labour force was reflected in the setting up, in the same year, of a site for an Industrial Compound where employers could erect their own housing for their employees. The standards on the different compounds varied greatly. The newest of the municipal compounds Libuyu, consisted mainly of two-roomed concrete block houses with asbestos roofs and their own kitchen, whereas Maramba was mainly Kimberley brick houses (which are much less permanent) and thatched roofs. The large industrial compounds had both barrack-type rows of houses for single men, and sections containing two-roomed houses for married couples. The poorest quality housing in the town tended not to be in the compounds themselves but was usually the accommodation provided for domestic workers on the plots of their European employers.<sup>1</sup> The following decade was, officially at least, the beginning of significant changes in attitudes, and eventually regulations. In 1960 it was reported that:

For some years housing conditions at Livingstone have lagged behind those in other centres on the line of rail, but now considerable progress is being made to meet the housing shortage .... When this programme

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:5-7).

has been completed the greater part of the backlog will have been met, and the old 'grass' huts can be pulled down.<sup>1</sup>

Such optimism, though heard many times over the previous thirty years, seemed possibly more justified. The number of permanent local authority administered houses had increased by 45% in only two years and the number of temporary buildings of all kinds had decreased by 57% in the previous five years.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 4.1

HOUSING TRENDS IN LIVINGSTONE: 1955 - 1961

	Permanent		Temporary and 'Grass'	
	1955	1961	1955	1961
Local Authority	2252	3279	981	205
Contractors	-	-	190	39
Government	462	174	-	-
Self-built	-	-	485	464

Source: Derived from Annual Report of Local Government and African Housing Department, Lusaka, 1961.

However, if one looks more closely at the figures given in Table 4.1, it is apparent that the total housing stock in the town actually decreased by almost 5% in that period.

<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs, 1960, p.73

<sup>2</sup> In fact, there was no building of any sort between 1955 and 1959, though it had been established that at least 1,000 new houses were required just in order to cope with the demolition of temporary housing that was going on at the time, and with no real allowance made for an increase in population. It was only in 1960 (595 new houses) and 1961 (425 new houses) that any real action was taken.

The significant difference, therefore, was not the quantity, but the type, of housing that had become available. The drop in quantity would not have been too important if the population had remained stable, as the new council accommodation was undoubtedly larger and better quality than the housing it replaced. But the town's population increased by over 60% between 1952 and 1963 and quantity was therefore a crucial aspect of the town's housing problem. The Council's 1960 claims to have met the housing shortage must, as a result, be treated with a great deal of caution. The following years showed further drastic reductions in spending on housing, and the emergence of the 'Aided Self-Help' building programme as a possible solution to the worsening problem. Livingstone's 'Site-and-Service' scheme was set up in 1967 when a site was prepared at Dambwa on the edge of the town but, as in other parts of the country, it has not been the success that was hoped for. Despite extensive publicity, only one-half of the plots had been taken up by 1970. There were a number of reasons for this, some of which reflect the general needs and attitudes of the population in terms of housing. Two of the problems were essentially practical and had arisen because of a lack of forethought on the part of those who had planned the scheme. The site of the compound was partly on top of an old graveyard and many people were unwilling to live on, or near, the graves of their ancestors. This was well known throughout the town, but the attitude of the authorities was that such 'traditional' concerns



could not be allowed to interfere with the town's development, particularly, as one official put it, "if Zambia wished to show that it was a modern state." The second problem was not a question of differences in attitudes, but simple bad judgement. During the summer, Livingstone experiences a good deal of rain in a short period and the 'Site-and-Service' scheme is located in such a way that it quickly becomes waterlogged and occasionally impassable. There are other problems which are not quite so obvious. The scheme was intended to cater particularly for those people living in the housing areas around the town that were considered sub-standard. It has emerged gradually that many of these people, for a variety of reasons, are not able (or do not wish) to take part in the scheme. I will be reconsidering this point when I have looked more closely at the housing needs of the population.

By the end of the decade, Livingstone had 35,000 people living in high density housing around the town. Despite its many problems it can be said that, in certain respects, it appears to have achieved a relatively high standard of housing by Zambian standards. Table 4.2 compares the type of housing available (as defined by rent payment) with a number of other towns. It shows Livingstone to have a very high proportion of housing administered by the government and the local authority and, as one might expect, a low proportion of company-owned housing. In terms of quality, Livingstone compares favourably with the capital Lusaka, as far as the

TABLE 4.2

DWELLINGS CLASSIFIED BY TYPE OF RENT PAYMENT:  
SELECTED TOWNS 1969

TOWN	RENTED (as % of total)	RENT PAID TO (%)			
		Private Landlord	Company	Government	Local Government
Livingstone	67.1	14.7	19.4	22.5	43.4
Mufilira	85.3	7.1	64.0	8.9	21.1
Ndola	66.9	7.1	31.7	17.1	44.0
Lusaka	60.3	25.8	9.8	27.0	37.4
ALL TOWNS	71.9	9.4	43.5	13.5	33.4

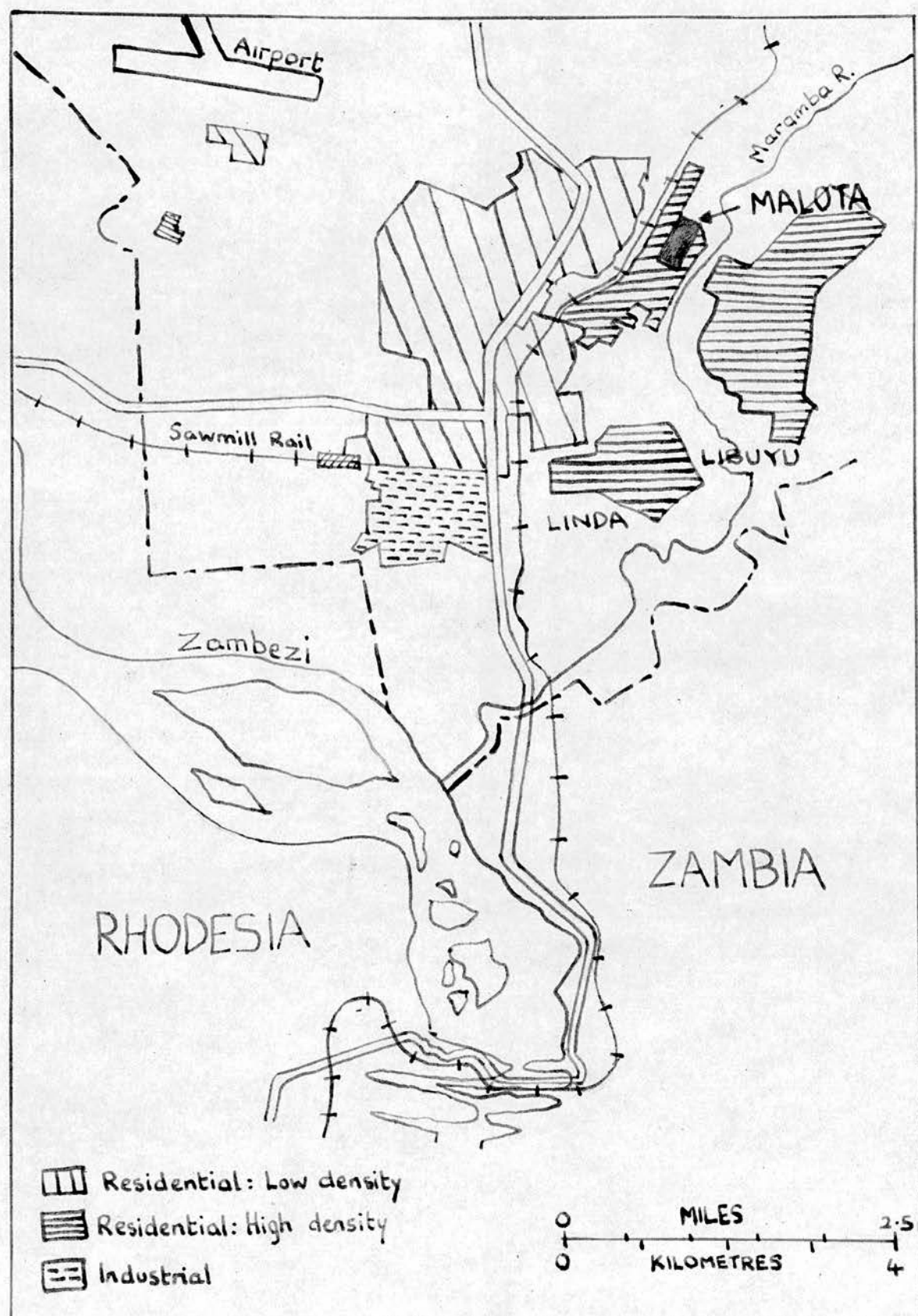
Source: 1969 Census, First Report, p.B65.

provision of facilities such as electricity (45% of all dwellings in 1969 compared with Lusaka's 32%), flush toilets (60% compared with 42%), though it does fall far behind both Lusaka and the national urban average in the provision of private water taps. In terms of the size and quality of its housing units it is not significantly worse, or better, than other urban areas.<sup>1</sup> Its superiority over Lusaka can be partially attributed to the fact that, unlike the capital where "40% of its population live in unauthorised settlements",<sup>2</sup> there are no squatter compounds in Livingstone. There is, however, one large

<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, Livingstone in 1969 had an average of 2.34 rooms/dwelling, which compares favourably with Lusaka's 2.24 but less favourably with the overall urban average of 2.42 (1969 Census, p.B63).

<sup>2</sup> Scyller (1969:4)

MAP 3: LIVINGSTONE



Source: Based on Davies (1971:89)



housing area which though it is the responsibility of the Municipal Council and, as such, is not 'unauthorised' has reached such a deplorable state that the town's Senior Health Inspector was obliged to comment that it "is virtually a 'squatters' camp and constitutes a problem which is common to most local authorities today."<sup>1</sup> This is Malota compound which forms the basis of this study.

#### 4.3 Malota Compound

Malota is quite definitely neither an unauthorised, nor a squatter, compound in the sense that I used these terms earlier. The use of the word 'squatter' in this context reflects a set of attitudes much wider than the relatively simple matter of legality of tenure. A good deal of the concern which led to the compound being declared a 'disaster area'<sup>2</sup> was related to questions of health and sanitation, and much was made publicly, even in the national press, of the physical appearance of the compound with terms such as 'eyesore', 'shantytown', and 'tumbledowns' frequently used. But, more importantly, this physical chaos was linked up with assumptions of social and political disorganisation, and the compound was regarded by the authorities and the general population as a centre for political opposition; as the refuge of prostitutes and criminals; and as a general threat to the welfare of the town. The development of the idea that

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Health Inspector to Town Clerk: 16/8/1967

<sup>2</sup> Times of Zambia, 21/1/1971

Malota was a 'squatter' compound was related to a belief that physically, socially, economically, and politically - it was separate from the town as a whole. Thus the term squatter was used to define a cluster of attributes which, in this case, had nothing to do with the legality, or illegality, of the tenure of its population.

There is no doubt, however, that in some respects Malota is unique not only in Livingstone but probably in Zambia. One of the most notable features has been that, for many years, it was the only area in Livingstone where Africans were able to lease land on which they could build their own houses. This can still be done, and any structures built become the property of the 'landlord' and may be rented out, or sold, without interference. In her survey McCulloch called it the 'Grass Compound', a reference to the high proportion of buildings with thatched roofs at that time. Officially it is known as Maramba Central, being surrounded on three sides by the large, council-built Maramba Compound which is close to the Maramba River. But, over the years, it has acquired the name Malota, a Nyanja word for the hedge euphorbia that grows around many of the compound's plots.<sup>1</sup> Malota predates surrounding Maramba, or any other existing compound, by many years. Its actual origins are much disputed, but it is generally accepted that it was the first compound to have been built by the newly settled European

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<sup>1</sup> Reynolds (1962:1) remarks that the Lozi equivalent muzwezi is also used in referring to the compound, but there was no evidence in 1971 that this was still so.

community at the beginning of this century. Reynolds comments that "it is known, however, that it was already in existence in 1913."<sup>1</sup> A small number of men living on Malota claimed to have been there for over fifty years, but they were unable to clear up the dispute and provided a variety of dates between 1907 and 1922.<sup>2</sup> It is known that the town's first location was set up in 1907 and that there was a charge of one shilling per head.<sup>3</sup> This location was intended for any African working within the town. What was to be done with those who were unable to find work, or who had just arrived in town, was still under consideration, though the general public was assured that the "supervision of natives within the precincts of the town is to be effectively performed."<sup>4</sup> Even at this early stage, the compound's problems were beginning to emerge and, in a report of a Livingstone Management Board meeting in late 1911, the Livingstone Mail remarked:

The only matters that were discussed that were of general importance related to the taking over of the cemetery and the native 'compound' near the Maramba. With regard to the latter the chairman undertook to interview the Administrator and to urge that it be placed under the control of the Board at an early

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<sup>1</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)

<sup>2</sup> Two informants in particular were adamant that the compound was not built until 1922 and I was, initially, tempted to accept this. Official sources and local legend, plus other oral evidence, eventually outweighed them. The problem lies in the changes in name over the years and the fact that all the compounds built near the Maramba river seemed to have been called, at one time or another, Maramba. On balance I feel certain that Malota is the original compound.

<sup>3</sup> Livingstone Mail, 30/11/1907.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



date. Complaints of insanitary and other objectionable conditions arising from overcrowding render this step necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Complaints had also begun to come in to the Management Board that unauthorised compounds were beginning to spring up all around the town. Having accepted authority for the two existing compounds, the Board began to develop its influence and introduce changes. It was decided, for example, that all huts should be roofed with corrugated iron, rather than thatch, despite the extra cost<sup>2</sup> (which was at present about £5 for each hut).<sup>3</sup> Stricter regulations were brought in with the introduction of compound managers and inspectors, passes and permits, the limitation of numbers on any one plot, and a variety of rules relating to the day-to-day existence of the compound's inhabitants.

Malota was first set up when the housing of Africans in town was a new problem to the European administrators, and the lessons learnt in setting it up seem to have provided the basis for future policy decisions particularly in terms of the need for the strict control of compound life in virtually all respects. It appears to have been at a very early stage that the Livingstone authorities decided that, besides actually building houses for Africans, it would be a good idea to provide plots of land on which individuals could build

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<sup>1</sup> Livingstone Mail, 21/10/1911

<sup>2</sup> Livingstone Mail, 17/8/1912

<sup>3</sup> Livingstone Mail, 26/10/1912

their own accommodation.<sup>1</sup>

In its early years, the compound was known as Kashitu and consisted of the four sections now known as A, B, C, and D. At the end of 1940 it became necessary to expand by adding a fifth, smaller section that is now called E. It is apparent that, even at this stage, the quality of housing was regarded as poor, for the Council built an 'experimental' house of thatch and sawn timber that they hoped would serve as a standard for the rest of the population. Reynolds reports that, because of the high cost (£13), the experiment was a failure.<sup>2</sup> At about the same time, a further overflow area was built with seventeen plots on it. This was destroyed in 1960.<sup>3</sup>

The monthly rent paid by the landlords has not varied very greatly over the years, though the per capita system of earlier days changed as more men brought their families onto the compound. Until 1960 the rent charged had been, for many years, 2s 6d per plot per month. In that year it was increased to 7s 6d so that the inhabitants might bear more of their share of the cost of the

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<sup>1</sup> One of the earliest of the long list of Livingstone Native Location Bye-Laws stated: "It shall be lawful for the Municipality to lease lots in the location where natives may erect their own huts or dwelling houses." I have been unable to trace exactly when this bye-law was introduced, but it was certainly before 1930.

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)

<sup>3</sup> The owners of these houses were given, on average, £29 as compensation.

services that the municipality provided.<sup>1</sup> However, these services have always been very basic and certainly have not improved in the last three decades.

In 1951, McCulloch felt that Malota closely resembled the 'African Townships' that had recently been set up on the Copperbelt. She noted the wide range of house types that were to be found; from "good brick houses with glass windows" to simple "mud huts or corrugated iron shacks".<sup>2</sup> She also noted the frequent existence of more than one hut to a plot, in which relatives, friends, or children would sleep. Her name for the location, the 'Grass Compound', is an obvious reflection on village-like appearance that it presented to the rest of the town. Ten years later, it had not changed much with the houses ranging from "dilapidated shanties or aged pole and daga huts, worth a few shillings, to substantial multi-roomed brick buildings worth up to £500 or more."<sup>3</sup> Basic facilities do not appear to have changed much at all for many years. In 1971, as ten years earlier, there was communal piped water provided through a total of 28 taps scattered around the compound. Sanitation was very primitive, with a dozen communal bucket latrines situated around three sides of the

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, in 1912 the cost was 1s 3d per capita plus a charge for sanitary services of 1s 3d/month. So, in relative terms, the cost of renting plots had, until 1960, decreased quite considerably.

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:5)

<sup>3</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)



compound. Reynolds mentioned the existence of "sewerage lines passing through or rather beneath the compound"<sup>1</sup>, though this was persistently denied to me by the authorities. Reynolds also mentioned that "the compound is regularly served by garbage lorries."<sup>2</sup> But the 1971 report of the Municipal Council admitted that:

Malota is not a clean township because there is no regular lifting of refuse. Refuse vehicles are unable to make the required trips due to the fact that the condition of the roads is harmful to the vehicles as the roads are subject to severe erosion. No large scale repair of roads was undertaken because the fate of Malota was unknown.<sup>3</sup>

It is undoubtedly true that the heavy rains that fall between December and March cause a good deal of erosion. However, there is also a distinct political element to the problem. Officials in the office of the Town Clerk make no secret of the fact that they had been trying to get rid of Malota for many years and admitted that the Council had been deliberately lax in such matters as refuse collection and sanitation. It is obvious from Reynolds' report that as early as 1961 it was firmly believed that Malota was very soon to be demolished, and he talks of the way in which people were trying to increase the value of their houses so that their compensation might be higher.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reynolds (1962:1)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Municipal Council Survey, 1971

<sup>4</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)

Despite the attempts of individual Malotans to improve the standards of their own plots, it is apparent that little has changed on the compound and, if anything, conditions have deteriorated. This is despite a general rise in the standards of municipal housing in Zambian urban areas. The low status of the compound has been exaggerated by two factors. Firstly, there has been a change in expectations on the part of the population because of the development in recent years of large municipal compounds that have made the possession of individual water and electricity supplies, as well as water-borne sanitation, much more widespread. Secondly, there has been the attitude of the local authorities who, wishing to rid themselves of the compound, have resorted to inactivity but have not been able to achieve their goals.

The problem caused by this reluctance on the part of the Council to improve facilities has been dramatised by the large increase in the compound's population over the last twenty years. At the time of McCulloch's survey in 1951, she estimated there to be 1,870 inhabitants which, in view of the strict limitations on the number of people to a plot that we noted earlier, was probably something like the number that the compound had been built for.<sup>1</sup> Ten years later, Reynolds commented:

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:7). This is an average of just under four to a plot.

Originally, only one main building or dwelling house was permitted to be built on each stand. Over the years this was relaxed, or rather, not sufficiently enforced. Control is still exercised over the population, however, and periodically the numbers are reduced and excessive building is stopped.<sup>1</sup>

The relaxation meant, however, that the population had increased by 25% to a total of 2,404, or that there were just over five people to a plot. Of these, 2,292 were permanent residents and the remainder, less than 5%, were 'visitors'. Independence in 1964, and the removal of 'discriminatory clauses' in bye-laws had an even more dramatic effect with the population estimated to be 4,119 by 1971, an increase of almost 70%.<sup>2</sup> There has been no parallel increase in the number of plots available which means that the number of people living on a plot has risen to an average of just under nine. But just how intense the problem of overcrowding has become cannot be understood until it is realised that on some plots there are over twenty people living on an area of land that McCulloch claimed would not allow "for more than two or three (houses), however closely together they are built."<sup>3</sup>

This deterioration in standards, hastened by the rapid increase in the compound's population, has resulted in a good deal of antagonism both within the compound and within the town generally, and many have demanded its demolition. Yet, over thirty years ago, much the same

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<sup>1</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)

<sup>2</sup> Municipal Council Survey, 1971

<sup>3</sup> McCulloch (1956:5). McCulloch uses the term 'house' to mean building in the context of Malota.



things were being said. For instance, the 1937 edition of Native Affairs was most explicit when it commented:

The compound is squalid, the sanitation fetid, and the site morbid ... until it is decided for whom the local authority is under an obligation to find housing accomodation ... it is idle to discuss the transfer of the Livingstone compound to a more salubrious site, or to afford such amenities as lights, libraries and canteens.

The following year the Municipality put forward a scheme to the Government which entailed "the laying out afresh of the present location, but on the old site."<sup>2</sup> It is not recorded what happened to the plan, but over twenty years later African Affairs commented that:

No progress has been made on a proper owner-housing scheme, though there are many Africans would like to see this come about and are ready to support it. Some have, in fact, built quite good houses in the grass compound which has been in existence probably since the town started. This area is popular because it is cheap but it must be replaced and a sub-committee of the council has been appointed to go into this whole problem.<sup>3</sup>

Such comments recur throughout Government and Council records and Reynolds' comment in 1961 that, "over the years, therefore, the decision has crystallised that Malota must be demolished"<sup>4</sup> is something of an understatement. A number of ways of solving the problem were suggested during the following decade. These included building a new 'African Township'; the gradual demolition of Malota section by section, with transit housing and

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs, 1937, pp 46-48

<sup>2</sup> Native Affairs, 1938, p.37

<sup>3</sup> African Affairs, 1959, p.75

<sup>4</sup> Reynolds (1962:3)

eventual resettlement in new accommodation on the old site; and a new and cheaper Site-and-Service scheme near to Malota. Yet in 1971 the compound still remained, and with a much larger population to be resettled should demolition take place.

In 1970 a special meeting was convened to review the situation. This was attended by the Southern Province's most prominent political figures and resulted in the following resolution:

That a petition be presented to his Honour the Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia, S.Kapepwe, Minister of Provincial and Local Government, requesting in the most urgent possible terms that in order to deal effectively with the problem of Malota compound, in which area thousands of people are living in heart-breaking conditions, the area be declared a disaster area, and that as a consequence the government make available all resources financial or otherwise to deal with the area in the manner in which disaster areas are usually dealt with.<sup>1</sup>

At this stage the problem of Malota had taken on a rather wider perspective for many people believed that it jeopardised Livingstone's status in the country. This attitude is best summed up in the following newspaper article which had the title "Malota - The Speck of Dust in the City's Eye?"<sup>2</sup> It said:

As Livingstone's bid for city status gathers momentum, the slums of Malota compound are fast coming into focus of worried health authorities.

A typical comment on the eyesore shanty town came yesterday from the Council's Officer of Health Dr.S.Paul, 'Malota is our headache when it comes to achieving a high degree of cleanliness. If Malota

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Livingstone Municipal Council: 9/5/1970.

<sup>2</sup> Times of Zambia, 29/12/1970

remains as it is, it will not be possible to do justice to Livingstone'.

Malota, it is obvious, is not a squatter compound in the sense that it is either unauthorised or illegal. But its long history of poor housing conditions and inadequate facilities stretching back over fifty years, in contrast to the gradually improving standards of housing in the town generally, has caused it to become regarded as such, even by those responsible for the welfare of its inhabitants. By its very appearance, which is thought by many to suggest that it is little more than a village planted within the boundaries of a town, it is considered unacceptable in a modern and independent Zambia. Physically, it has changed very little during its history and the buildings and facilities have not improved to any great extent, perhaps even the opposite. As a result, many of Livingstone's citizens believe it to be backward and see it as supporting, and being a repository of, the traditions that must disappear if Zambia is to progress. It is in this sense that Malota has become, in the eyes of the rest of the town, a 'squatter' compound. Such attitudes throw up a number of interesting questions. In general terms, to what extent are such perceptions a true picture of what actually constitutes a 'squatter' compound? More specifically, is Malota really like this? And, finally, drawing on the answers to the first two questions, to what extent is Malota similar to other squatter compounds in Zambia? In the next chapters I want to look more closely at some of the



characteristics and activities of Malota's population in order to answer these questions.

## CHAPTER 5

### PLOTS AND TENANCY ON MALOTA

#### 5:1 The Plots

The compound is surrounded on three sides by the large Council-built Maramba compound, and on the fourth by empty and untended land which stretches over the town boundary into the neighbouring countryside. One of the first features that a visitor notices is the large amount of vegetation, trees and hedges, that grows as compared with the surrounding areas. Similarly, the symmetry and order of Maramba, where each plot has a single building of standard design, provides a stark contrast with the apparently random placement of Malota's buildings, and the great diversity of architectural style. The disorder is partly an illusion in the sense that, unlike most squatter areas, there is a basic underlying grid of equal sized plots and clearly laid-out pathways that has been there since the early days of the compound and which, with few exceptions, is still adhered to. In this use of straight lines, which "have had an over-riding influence on the layout of development in urban Zambia",<sup>1</sup> Malota

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<sup>1</sup> Waddington (1976:62)

has much in common with the majority of official housing areas in the country. The plots are all of one size,<sup>1</sup> but within that area may lie as many as six buildings of totally different styles, constructed from a variety of materials, and arranged with no apparent logic other than the pressing need for accommodation.

At the time of McCulloch's study, she estimated that there were "about 500 small plots"<sup>2</sup> though, according to her sample, only 453 of these were actually occupied. Ten years later, Reynolds stated that there were 475 stands of which ten were used for communal latrines, one for water, and one for the church of the Jehovah's Witnesses. In 1971 I calculated, using personal observation and Ordnance Survey maps, that there were 476 plots. Six of these were being used for communal latrines, eight of them had no buildings on them, and one plot had once had a latrine but this had recently been demolished. Three of the plots had not had anyone living on them for a considerable period of time, and one other plot remained the base of the Jehovah's Witness sect. This left a total of 457 plots that were being used for residential purposes. We can see that, in terms of basic physical layout, there has been very little change on the

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch notes (1956:5) that each plot is 50sq.yds. in size (i.e. about 21' x 21') whereas Reynolds states that they are 50' x 50' (i.e. 277sq.yds.). Both personal observation and Ordnance Survey maps suggest that Reynolds, though slightly over-estimating, has a much more accurate figure.

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:5)



compound over the last twenty years.

Though the compound has obviously been laid out with symmetry in mind, the different sections are not equal in size. Sections D and E also have a smaller proportion of their plots actually occupied, in the first case because a number of plots have been used for communal facilities, and in the latter because a number have had their buildings demolished. (See Table 5.1).

A web of pathways separate the plots into groups of 14 (10 on E section and 16 on B section), and individual plots are usually enclosed by a combination of walls and hedges. This gives the plots an air of being enclosed, and provides a degree of privacy that one would not expect with such overcrowding. Neither the pathways nor the yards have been tarred or concreted, though individual yards are normally swept and provide few problems even during the rains. As we have already seen, this cannot be said of the pathways which are the responsibility of the Council. A good deal of rubbish accumulates and this is only infrequently, and haphazardly, cleared away. During the rains, streams and large pools form quickly and certain parts of the compound become a morass. With the inevitable flooding of the bucket toilets at this time, the general state of Malota deteriorates rapidly during the first three months of the year, with the after-effects lasting several more months. It is a credit to many of Malota's plot-holders that they manage to keep their plots in such a presentable condition despite their environment.

TABLE 5.1

POPULATION AND LAYOUT OF MALOTA, BY SECTION:  
1961 - 1971

Section	Number of laid-out plots 1961 and 1971	Number of occupied plots		Total population	
		1961	1971	1961	1971
A	98	96	96	434	875
B	112	107	110	615	985
C	98	92	97	500	892
D	98	94	90	510	770
E	70	62	64	345	586
TOTAL	476 <sup>a</sup>	451 <sup>b</sup>	457	2404 <sup>c</sup>	4108 <sup>d</sup>

Sources: 1961 - Reynolds (1961:3)  
1971 - Municipal Survey 1971

- Notes:
- a) Reynolds says that there are only 475 stands but the compound is laid out in such a way that I feel that this must be an error on his part and 476 was the real figure.
  - b) Twelve plots were excluded from Reynolds' analysis because in ten cases the absence of the householder meant that there was insufficient data, in one case the householder would not cooperate, and in the other the householder had two stands.
  - c) This figure includes visitors as they are not distinguished in the 1971 figures.
  - d) This figure is derived from the actual household returns of the Municipal Survey. In the case of section population figures, my calculations do not always coincide with those in the Council's final report, though the differences are minor.

5:2 The Facilities

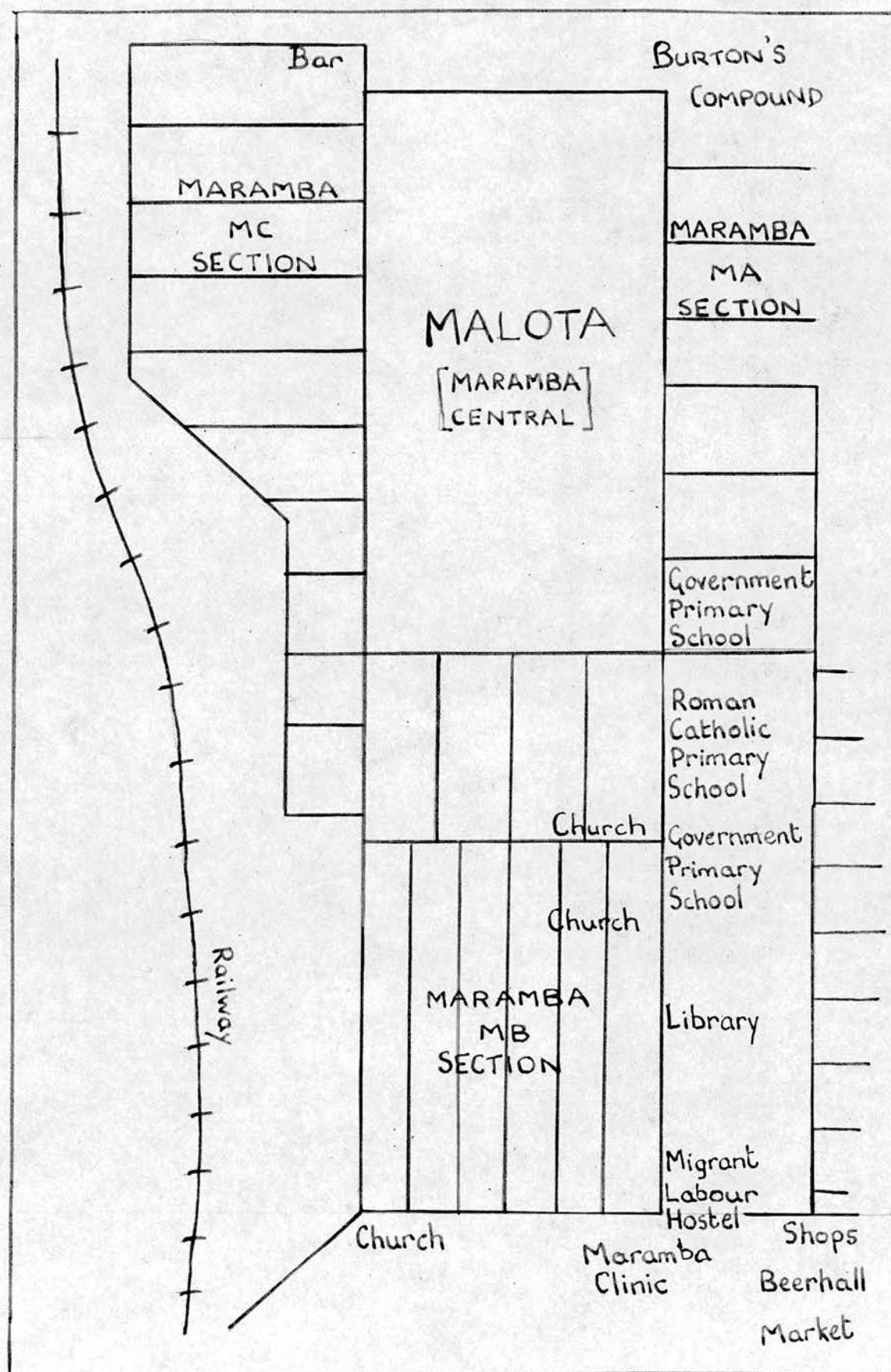
Reynolds (1962:6) makes the comment that Malota "occupies a valuable site which is very favourably

situated with regard to the central amenities of Maramba." Major facilities such as schools, shops and churches are normally the same as those used by people living on other parts of Maramba. Malotans have easy access to a number of schools, a variety of churches, and the large, open, Maramba market is only about a quarter of a mile away. There are several bars around, though not on, the compound and until the beginning of 1971, when it was closed to make way for a welfare centre, there was the large Maramba Beer Hall opposite the market. All these facilities are clustered to the East and South-East of Maramba (see Diagram 5.1). Though there are no proper roads passing through Malota, it is surrounded by a good road system and the inhabitants have easy access to transport to take them to other parts of Livingstone.

Though there are no shops and no market on the compound, many of the inhabitants have set up their own businesses which they run from their plots and it is possible to buy a wide variety of goods including vegetables, fruit, beer and a range of domestic articles. The production of illegal beer is an important activity on the compound, as is tailoring, curio-carving and blacksmithing. All these businesses are run from the plots which serve as workplace and market. The compound is in no way self-sufficient and for the provision of basic services such as education, health, spiritual welfare and the majority of consumer goods, the Malotan is dependant upon much the same facilities as the rest of Maramba's



DIAGRAM 5.1: MARAMBA



population. It may very well be that it is this easy access to a wide range of comparatively good facilities that has made Malota attractive and difficult to get rid of, despite its obvious disadvantages. For example, a number of parents I met were very unhappy about moving up to Dambwa site-and-service scheme because of the inferior educational facilities. We can see then that in a wide variety of situations a person living on Malota becomes as much a Maramban as any person living in the new council housing that surrounds him.

### 5:3 The Houses

Under colonial regulations, any house that was built had to have a permit which described it, and the materials used in constructing it; which defined the number of people to live in it; and which stated specifically where the location superintendent would allow it to be placed. Such regulations strictly controlled both the physical layout and the social composition of the plots. Technically, a man could build as many buildings as he liked on his plot providing he gained permission. The main restriction was on who was able to live in them; workmates and relatives were strictly not allowed. Like any laws, they were broken, and the frequency with which this happened increased quite rapidly during the 1950s. The eventual revocation of all these regulations gave a great deal of freedom to the individuals who rented the

plots from the Council, and many of them were quick to make use of it. There were now several possible courses of action not previously open to them. The number of units built, and the number of people living in them, was no longer determined by anyone but the plot-holder and it became possible to build as many houses, and accommodate as many people, as was physically and economically viable. The major change was that housing could be sub-let without permission (previously rarely given), and it became a relatively simple matter to leave the compound whilst continuing to obtain rents from property owned there. Subsequently, sub-letting has become an important source of income and many plot-holders prefer to have a number of smaller units on their plots for renting out, rather than a large single unit for the housing of themselves and their immediate family.

An important need that frequently dictated extra housing units was the obligation to provide accommodation for relatives and 'brothers' arriving in the town looking for jobs, awaiting a house on one of the better compounds, returning to their rural homes after working in the North or in Rhodesia, or passing through on their way to the Copperbelt or Lusaka. Such people have to be catered for and the revocation of crucial housing regulations ensured that accommodation was available at all times. Housing needs are a variable factor subject to ad hoc changes as other factors, such as income or family obligations, alter. Colonial regulations took no account of this or were deliberately inflexible. With their removal, the



consequence (probably unintended) has been to introduce a flexibility that has led to over 75% of Malota's plots now having more than one residential unit.

The lack of facilities such as water and electricity supplies means that even the best houses on the compound are of a very basic nature, and the worst may consist of little more than four walls and a roof. The Council Report of 1971 commented that: "Most of the houses are made of poles and dagger with galvanised zinc roofs."<sup>1</sup> This is an exaggeration for, though pole and dagga is still used, Kimberley brick, burnt brick, and concrete blocks have taken over as the primary building materials. The former, which is a sun-dried brick, is liable to erode if exposed to the elements and is only semi-permanent. However, a house built with such a material can last a long time if well built, with good foundations, overhanging eaves, and plaster to protect the bricks.<sup>2</sup> It is popular because it is cheap (one ngwee per brick in 1970), and relatively easy to make. During the dry season, large areas of the compound were covered with bricks that were being made. The official policy for Malota during the 1960s was that no new permanent houses could be built and that only repairs to existing structures were allowed. This policy was quite blatantly ignored by the citizens of Malota, particularly as it was only too easy to blur the distinction between repairing

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<sup>1</sup> Municipal Council Report, 1971

<sup>2</sup> Development Planning and Research Unit, Lusaka (1972:136)

and building. Houses can be built very cheaply for as little as K20<sup>1</sup>, and more importantly they can be built quickly. Inevitably, they are structurally inferior, and every year a number collapse during the rainy season. In recent years an increasing number of men have set up in business on the compound as 'bricklayers' in order to cope with the increased need for cheap housing. The low quality of the housing has been exaggerated by the persistent awareness that Malota might soon be demolished, and an uncertainty as to how plot-holders would be compensated (if at all) were this to happen. Many plot-holders were quite explicit in blaming rumours of demolition (supported by the refusal of the authorities to improve facilities) for the poor quality of their own housing. They felt that the authorities, and not Malota's inhabitants, should be blamed for the deplorable conditions and several claimed that they had been strongly 'advised' by Council officials not to waste their money, time, and energy on improving their housing from as early as 1962. Equally however, many landlords felt that they had been receiving warnings for so many years without anything happening that it was unlikely that the compound would ever be demolished. Some of them were annoyed that, because of Council 'advice', they had spent nearly ten years living in poor conditions when they could have

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<sup>1</sup> The DFRU (1972:142) found that "65.3% of the houses in Nguluwe cost less than K40 to build and 49.9% of those in George cost less than K49". Over a quarter of the houses in Nguluwe cost less than K20.

afforded much better.

But in a large number of cases the problem is a simple question of economics. Many plot-holders have an income that is too low to enable them to carry out a major project such as building a reasonably large, permanent house. Even if they were able to raise the necessary capital, the returns from two or three smaller units, if they are sub-let, are greater. For a number of reasons then, the housing standard is generally low with an increasing tendency for plot-holders to build a number of small, cheap units. This trend is well summarised by the comment of one politician who said: "Most often what matters is the number of houses that a landlord has, rather than the quality of the house."<sup>1</sup>

Houses show great variations externally in size and design. Roofing is normally made of sheets of galvanised zinc though the standard is erratic, sometimes being carefully constructed so as to be an effective and permanent protection against the elements, but in other cases seeming to have been thrown together haphazardly with no thought to either permanence or protection. Though Malota could no longer be called a 'grass compound' in McCulloch's sense of the word, there are still a significant number of buildings with thatched roofs, and certain parts of Malota retain a distinctly rural aspect with whole plots being built in traditional style.

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<sup>1</sup> A similar comment was made in the 1971 Council Report.



However, even Malotans are on the whole against this, believing that such structures are mainly responsible for the traditional, conservative image that the compound has gained. Inevitably, such housing exaggerates the view that many have of Malota as being a 'village in a town'.

The exteriors of the houses are normally simple with little elaboration, though they are often plastered. In shape, the buildings are most often L-shaped or oblong. Their outsides reflect the basically functional nature of accommodation on the compound. Colours are usually 'natural' though during the late 1960s there was the emergence of a phenomenon that had been noted on compounds in the capital, when a number of individuals painted colourful, and frequently attractive, designs on the outside walls of their houses. But such buildings reflect only part of the wide range of structures to be found on Malota. At the other end of the scale were a number of units, the design of which sprang from European rather than African sources. A few in fact could well be described as 'bungalows'. Such plots stand out from the rest of Malota as much as the compound does from surrounding Maramba. These buildings are substantial, with up to ten rooms, and sometimes worth over K1000, despite the fact that they still do not have some of the basic facilities. A notable feature of some of these units is the presence of glass-filled windows, something that is not found very often in Malota's buildings.

As is the case throughout Africa, household activity is rarely confined within buildings on Malota.

Buildings on a plot are often spaced in such a way as to leave a courtyard, and the remaining land is heavily utilised for work, cooking, storage, washing, brewing and so on. Some of the plots have small vegetable gardens. Many of the plots are used for business purposes, and an extra building is often set up for sewing machines, blacksmith's bellows and so on. A great deal of social activity takes place within the courtyards of the plots which, though separated off by hedges, have their entrances facing onto the public pathways and are therefore open to passers-by and neighbours. The large number of trees scattered around different plots provide excellent focal points for friends, neighbours and relatives to meet, talk and argue.

The intensive use of land and the great physical variety serve to create an impression of disorder and chaos; an impression which is often extended to the social and political life of the compound by those who live elsewhere in the town. The physical disorder also acts to exaggerate the view that Malota is a completely separate community providing a stark and vivid contrast with the uniformity of the rest of the town's newer housing areas.

#### 5:4 The Occupants

A series of changes at the national and local level have meant that Malota's population has more than doubled in the last twenty years. However, such changes did not make it inevitable that the population should increase so rapidly. After all, the compound is not, on the surface

at least, a highly desirable residential area. Other factors are involved that make Malota the only acceptable or possible option for a large number of people.

During the 1960s the population of Livingstone grew rapidly as people moved from the rural areas, and particularly from the Southern Province and Barotseland, into the town in order to find the jobs and opportunities promised by the politicians in a new, independent Zambia. Livingstone's Municipal Council, like its counterparts throughout Zambia, was unable to cope with the demand for new jobs and the consequent needs for housing, and there has developed a waiting list for Council accommodation that will take many years to deal with. In 1971 this list involved, in what seemed to be a conservative estimate, about 5,000 people. Prior to independence, with jobs and housing being interdependent, men arriving in Livingstone who were unable to find employment within a short period would find themselves under a good deal of pressure, both formal and informal, either to return to their village or to move on northwards to Lusaka or the Copperbelt. This has now changed, though the rents of Council accommodation on the newer compounds (as much as K12 a month in 1970) would probably still be great enough to deter those who did not have a regular income. In any case, the waiting period is so long that the likelihood of a man getting a house before a job is very remote. However, the ability of plot-holders on post-independence Malota to build and sub-let extra housing has made it unnecessary for individuals without housing to return home or to move on to



perhaps greater problems in Zambia's other urban areas. Sub-letting allows a man, and his family if necessary, to have temporary accommodation until he finds a job and, possibly, alternative accommodation. A few years before independence Epstein commented that: "Where so much depends upon having a job, unemployment must count as a major hazard in African urban life."<sup>1</sup> Though unemployment<sup>2</sup> is still a major problem in Zambia's towns, its effect on individuals is lessened by accommodation situations such as Malota where housing is cheaper and where they can set up in business for themselves. Such a function is served by the squatter compounds of other Zambian towns, but Malota is the only area in Livingstone where these things are possible, sub-tenancy being severely restricted elsewhere.

As a result of these factors, the tenancy system on Malota is based around four categories; the 'landlords', the 'sleeping landlords', the tenants, and the sub-tenants. Though they cannot be understood as social groupings, they do share certain characteristics.

### 5:5 The 'Landlords'

Though not the largest category on Malota, the

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1961:40)

<sup>2</sup> The whole question of what actually constitutes 'unemployment', and whether in fact it is a relevant term will be dealt with in Chapter 6.

landlords<sup>1</sup> are in some ways the most important group of men for they have access to one of the town's scarcest resources, accommodation. The 1971 Council Report considered that they "have their hearts on their plots." Any buildings on the plot are the property, and the responsibility, of the landlord. When a plot changes hands, the incoming landlord is required to buy these buildings, even if it is his intention to destroy them. Though no provision is made for such actions in council regulations, the "township authorities, although aware of the transaction, do not interfere unless rent is overdue."<sup>2</sup> In such a situation the council would probably offer the plot to anyone who was willing to pay the back rent. Because property is very scarce, the amount of compensation paid to an outgoing landlord may be surprisingly high. A single Kimberley brick building of very elementary design with no glass windows may cost a prospective landlord as much as K200. In effect the buyer is paying for the right to rent land from the council, thus acquiring for himself certain facilities apart from accom-

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<sup>1</sup> The 'landlords' are not technically landlords. They themselves rent a plot from the Municipal Council for the sum of 75ngwee a month. Though some of them subsequently sub-let, this is only optional and therefore a more correct term would probably be 'plot-holder'. The 1971 Municipal Council Report, however, constantly refers to them as 'landlords', and the high incidence of sub-letting has caused them to be seen as such by the general population, irrespective of the factual accuracy of the term. I will therefore follow this line and use the term 'landlord' for convenience sake but on the assumption that it strictly means 'plot-holder'.

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:2)

modation. Frequently the first action of the new landlord is to raze the existing buildings and replace them with more, or superior, structure.<sup>1</sup> When plots do change hands, it is normally an informal transaction between the two parties involved. Only rarely are plots advertised publicly (usually a notice pinned to a tree), and changes occur sometimes literally overnight with a minimum of fuss. Such changes may occur for a number of reasons. A landlord may die; he may move to higher standard accommodation elsewhere in Livingstone; he may move to the Copperbelt or Lusaka; or he may return to his rural home. The 1971 Council Report comments that the "plots have either been bought or inherited from parents or relatives who first pioneered Livingstone". This is in fact the case with only a small minority of plots. Reynolds found that 393 landlords (87%)<sup>2</sup> obtained their plot by purchasing it from their predecessor; 40 were given their plot; four had been occupants from the very establishment of Malota; one site was inherited; and eight others were asked to come and take over the plot in the absence of the owner.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting sidelight on this is the fact that it is compulsory for all Malotans to raze their buildings if they leave to live in the Dambwa site-and-service scheme. Inevitably, this, with the subsequent loss of compensation, has been a further deterrent for those who might consider leaving Malota.

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds actually uses the term 'Occupier'. In 1961 this was essentially the same as 'landlord'.

<sup>3</sup> Though I have no way of checking it, the figure of one for plots inherited seems very low, and it seems to me that some of the forty plots that come under the category of 'given' might easily be regarded as inherited.



Because plots rarely come on to the market, particularly in the last decade, it is usually the case that a man has to live on Malota - either with relatives or as a sub-tenant - before he can get the opportunity to acquire a plot of his own. This tendency has been accentuated because knowledge of the availability of plots is usually obtained through informal links on the compound, links which are best developed by living there. A small number of the landlords I met had obtained their plots by going from house to house and having the good fortune to contact someone who intended, or could be persuaded by financial means, to leave the compound.<sup>1</sup>

In 1961 Reynolds found that in a small number of cases (just over 5%) the rent was being paid by someone other than the landlord. The municipality itself was responsible for six of the cases, (presumably their employees) and the Mission Societies were paying for three others. By 1971 a very different situation was in evidence. At that stage only 73% of the occupied plots had their landlords present, which meant that over one plot in four did not have the official landlord, as registered with the Council, living there. A review of council records made it possible to trace the whereabouts of the landlord in about three-quarters of these cases. Four of the absentees lived elsewhere on Malota, renting two, and

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<sup>1</sup> There were a number of rumours that certain individuals had obtained plots by placing pressure on those who were living there, sometimes of a physical nature. Though I chose not to follow up the topic, I am certain that, in a very limited number of cases, this has happened.

in one case three, plots on the compound. A fairly substantial number, twenty three, lived on surrounding Maramba compound and another fifteen had houses in either Libuyu or Dambwa compounds. A small group of less than a dozen lived in various other spots in Livingstone, and the rest were scattered throughout Zambia (with the exception of one man who was living in Rhodesia). Thus about 60% of the absentee landlords still lived in the town, in most cases having moved from Malota as accommodation on the newer and better compounds became available, but having retained their rights on Malota. These plots where the landlord is absent fall into two categories; those in which the landlord is defined by the authorities as a 'sleeping' landlord and those where the plot has an officially registered tenant.

### 5:6 The 'Sleeping' Landlord

In recent years, particularly since independence, the phenomenon of 'sleeping' landlords has emerged. This term means that the landlord of the plot, on moving away from Malota, retains the rights and responsibilities of the plot. He continues to pay rent to the council but also continues to collect the rents of any sub-tenants who might be living there. Such men are described in the 1971 Council Report as "the worst exploiters of man by man". Though in a number of cases this is an unfair remark, sleeping landlords are often able to make a good deal of money from sub-letting their properties. Thus the average number of sub-tenants living on plots run by

'sleeping' landlords is 2.3 compared with a figure of 1.3 for the whole compound. Similarly only 7% of such compounds have no sub-tenants at all, compared with a figure of 37% for all plots on Malota. A number of these landlords have found themselves in this position after having obtained employment in an organisation that provides them with accommodation on one of the better compounds. Retaining a plot on Malota provides them with a not inconsiderable supplementary income (as much as K25 a month), or in other cases with the opportunity to help out relatives who have their own accommodation problems. The Council Report qualifies its critical comment by saying that sleeping landlords are only "few in number, about 100." In fact, this is an overestimation and there are only 70. But, though this may be a small number in absolute terms, it represents just over 15% of the total number of occupied plots on the compound. Moreover, it appears to be a category that is increasing quite rapidly. McCulloch provided no statistics on this category, but it is possible to make certain conclusions from Reynolds' report, though he never actually uses the term 'sleeping' landlord. He was able to interview and obtain data directly from 425 (out of a possible 461) landlords - i.e. the people actually paying rent to the Council. In ten other cases the rent was being paid by various institutions; ten more by the relatives of whoever was living on the plot; leaving only sixteen cases where there was any possibility of a sleeping landlord, a figure of 4% at the very most. It seems safe to assume that the figure was no



higher ten years earlier and that the emergence of sleeping landlords as a significant category is a consequence of the removal of regulations at Independence.

### 5:7 The Tenants

The third category of plot-holder are those people described as 'tenants'. These are individuals who, though not owning the property on a plot, pay the monthly rent directly to the Council and are officially acknowledged by that body. There are 52 tenants on Malota and, without exception, they have acquired their tenancy through relatives or friends who have left the compound. In 1961 Reynolds noted only eight cases of people who had been asked to occupy a stand in the absence of the owner, a figure of less than 2% of all plots compared with 11% in 1971. In the majority of cases involving tenants there is an understanding, if only implicit, that the arrangement might only be temporary and that, were the previous landlord to return, his position as payer and receiver of rents would be immediately restored. A limited sample of twenty tenants showed that 60% of the original landlords were living outside of Livingstone, a substantially greater proportion than for 'sleeping' landlords.<sup>1</sup> The 1971 Council Report says of the tenants that they are mostly middle-aged and this suggests that, in many cases, the tenant has taken

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<sup>1</sup> These earlier figures were for all absentee landlords, including tenants. In fact, over 70% of 'sleeping' landlords have remained in Livingstone.

over when an older relative has retired to his home town or village.<sup>1</sup>

### 5:8 The Sub-Tenants

The fourth category - the sub-tenant - has in recent years become, numerically at least, the most significant. In 1961 Reynolds had commented:

In all but a few cases (friends, servants) the residents of a stand are related to the Occupier, either directly or by marriage. Naturally, the majority are wives and offspring. Parents and brothers or sisters are also frequently to be found.<sup>2</sup>

Residents outside of the landlord's family were a rare phenomenon, sub-letting virtually non-existent. Once again, independence was to change all this and ten years later there were 580 sub-tenants on Malota. A total of 288 plots had at least one sub-tenant (i.e. 63% of all plots) and sub-tenants made up 14% of the total population of the compound. The sub-tenants rent units, normally of a low standard, from the landlord at a cost of between K3 and K5 per month. Normally the reasons that they gave for living on Malota related to the lack of housing elsewhere in the town. Many had rejected the possibility of living on the Dambwa site-and-service scheme. Others, particularly those with dependants, had found themselves in the position of being offered employment by one of the companies in the town, being told to

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<sup>1</sup> This is by no means universal. I recorded two cases where aged parents were acting as tenants for their sons who were working elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:4)

see the Council's housing department about accommodation, and then finding themselves at the end of a very long waiting list. In this situation they must either refuse the job or quickly find 'temporary' housing on Malota. Many of the men who find themselves in this position are young men arriving in Livingstone for the first time, and the majority of sub-tenants are between the ages of 18 and 30. A relatively large percentage are single, and it is these men who have particular difficulty in obtaining accommodation elsewhere in the town. Sub-tenants are much more likely to be working for the large firms in the town and in this respect, as we shall later see, they represent a major deviation as far as employment patterns on Malota go.

### 5:9 Conclusion

Table 5.2 shows the relative significance of the four categories of tenancy that have been discussed in this chapter. The question of accommodation on Malota can be partly understood in terms of changes in the significance of each of these four categories.

Under the colonial administration, the majority of adult males coming to Malota were - by the very nature of the regulations - also 'landlords', and an individual choosing to live on the compound normally expected to acquire a plot of his own. The situation now is that there are many more adult males than there are plots. Becoming a landlord is therefore no longer virtually inevitable. Vacancies for plots are rare and prices



TABLE 5.2

## LANDLORDS, TENANTS, AND SUB-TENANTS ON MALOTA IN 1971

	SECTION					TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	E	
Number of occupied plots	96	110	97	90	64	457
Plots with landlords present	76	75	71	66	47	335
Plots with official tenants	11	18	7	10	6	52
Plots with 'sleeping' landlords	9	17	18	15	11	70
Plots with sub-tenants	65	72	61	49	41	288
Total of sub-tenants	128	163	119	97	73	580

Source: Household returns of the Livingstone Municipal Survey, 1971.

consequently high. But, equally, it is no longer essential to become a landlord, with all the financial commitment involved, in order to remain on the compound. Some individuals, whose intention is to stay on the compound only temporarily, may choose to continue as a sub-tenant even if the possibility of becoming a landlord should arise.

As a result Malota now caters for a wider range of housing needs than before. Though it still tends to serve those who have been excluded from other forms of housing in the town, it presents a number of options that have attracted certain categories of individuals who would

previously have had no chance, or no wish to, live there. The effect has been to drastically alter the social and demographic composition of the compound and it is to this that I now wish to turn in more detail.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF MALOTA

#### 6:1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters I have looked at certain historical and physical features of the compound and have attempted to show that there are a number of phenomena which are peculiar to Malota as far as compound life in Livingstone is concerned. But the compound is not a static and isolated unit. Its inhabitants are involved in wider contexts outside of its boundaries - political, industrial, familial etc. - and therefore have been intimately involved with the dramatic changes of the last twenty five, and particularly the last ten years. The town has seen enormous changes since McCulloch's study, and it would be impossible for Malota not to have been affected in some manner. For example, the increase in population size alone must have had an enormous impact on those who live there. Yet in many ways the authorities perceive Malota in much the same way as in the past. They acknowledge that it has deteriorated physically; that it is older, dirtier, and uglier. It still stands out like a sore thumb from the rest of the town, and this continuing physical marginality gives the superficial impression that, socially, it does not change. These perceptions are



reflected in the unwarranted 'squatter' status, with its implications of illegality of tenure, that has recently been attributed to the compound. There has been little real attempt to understand the structural changes that have taken place; to see how the compound has changed in relation to the rest of the town; or to understand it in terms of contemporary Zambian society. In this chapter I wish to look at certain features of the compound's social composition between the years 1951 and 1971. Starting from the assumption that "if population provides a reflection of society, population change provides a reflection of social change."<sup>1</sup> I hope to show, by re-working the statistics from the three studies of 1952, 1961, and 1971, that there were radical changes in the compound's demographic structure, and that Malota in 1971 is a distinctly different phenomenon from the Grass Compound that McCulloch surveyed nearly twenty years earlier. If the compound is still unique within the town, it is a different form of uniqueness.

In attempting to describe certain features of the compound's social composition, I have drawn heavily on Kapferer's idea of social composition as being "an emergent property from an ongoing social process."<sup>2</sup> He argues that the description of social composition is not separate from analysis, but part of the analytic framework. The concept of 'emergent property' is taken from the work of

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<sup>1</sup> Knoop (1971b:10)

<sup>2</sup> Kapferer (1972:63)

Blau who defines emergent properties as being "essentially relationships between elements in a structure. The relationships are not contained in the elements though they could not exist without them."<sup>1</sup> A simple example given by Blau to illustrate the point is that age distribution is an attribute that only exists at the group or social level, for individuals do not possess such an attribute, only an age; yet individuals are obviously needed for this phenomenon to exist. Kapferer extends the concept in order to describe the social composition of a small Zambian clothing factory. He comments:

I view the clothing factory as a social organization which straddles a number of life, migratory and job careers which are at different points of development. Its social composition at any given time is viewed as emergent from a set of individual choices and decisions subject to a variety of constraints.<sup>2</sup>

Individuals arrive in a particular situation or environment as a consequence of a series of choices, decisions and actions made in the past. Differences within a population can be related to differences in the choices and decisions that individuals make. This is summarised by Garbett who says:

The individual is conceptualized as pursuing multiple objectives in different contexts. The choices the individual makes in relation to the various alternatives are seen, in varying degrees, as constraining one another. The individual is envisaged as moving through time along a career path which is full of fateful choices.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blau (1964:3)

<sup>2</sup> Kapferer (1972:63)

<sup>3</sup> Garbett (1975:124)

Such choices take place within a framework of constraints operating at the macro-level, some of which may remain constant and others which may be changing over time.

It is through this sort of orientation that Kapferer believes he can solve the problem that he first poses himself: "How can I describe the changing social composition of the factory without introducing a considerable element of unwanted stasis into my description?"<sup>1</sup> It is in the particular respect of change that his concepts are of interest to this monograph, for if Malota has changed in the last twenty years, which it undoubtedly has, it has not changed as the result of some organising, directive body. It has altered because the individuals who live there have, in certain ways and as the result of certain factors, changed, as have the normative constraints within which they must operate. Viewing Malota's social composition through the conceptual framework provided by Kapferer allows us, firstly, to avoid seeing it as some sort of functional system or sub-system, but at the same time prevents us from considering it simply as the consequence of the characteristics of a large number of unrelated individuals.

Kapferer's work deals specifically with a formal organization, which of course Malota is not. But, as he insists, his approach was developed in order that he might avoid studying the factory as something that was an entity apart, separate from, though interdependent with, the

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<sup>1</sup> Kapferer (1972:62)



general environment. In any case, it seems to me that the general point that Kapferer makes, i.e. that differences in situation and context may be related through an understanding of the decision making processes of the individuals involved in them, is universally applicable; a conceptual tool with a dynamic component that is particularly valuable to the urban researcher. It is particularly valuable in allowing us to integrate within the same framework the demographic measures by which we quantify urban growth and development, and also the sociological processes which constitute 'urbanization'.

Over the years there has been a continual flow of people onto, and away from, Malota. At the same time there have been, as we saw in the preceding chapters, major changes in the social, economic, and political framework within which Malota's inhabitants must live. If aspects of the social composition of the compound, for example age distribution, have changed, it is because of the interconnection of a number of major factors at different levels. Through a consideration of these factors, I hope to be able to understand how it is that certain categories of people are disproportionately represented on Malota and why, for example, some people become sub-tenants rather than plot-holders. In particular, I wish to look in detail at the relationship between changing accommodation patterns and various factors such as age and occupational status.

## 6:2 Malota's Population - Demographic Characteristics

The most striking features of the Grass Compound population, compared with the overall population, are: the preponderance of men in the older age groups, and the comparatively balanced sex ratio; the considerable numbers of children and other dependants and co-residents living on the plots; the presence of a large proportion of skilled men and traders and of men who were self-employed; and the presence of a comparatively large number of men and women whose attitudes to town life suggested that they were 'permanently stabilised'.<sup>1</sup>

These conclusions, made in 1952, show how very different Malota was from the rest of the housing areas in Livingstone. At the same time they tell us much about urban life generally at that particular time for they implicitly describe what was not happening elsewhere in the town. They give a picture of Malota that suggests it was virtually a refuge for certain categories of the population that were poorly represented in other housing areas; in particular women, children, older men and dependants. They suggest that circular migration was still, generally, the dominant pattern and that the workforce was by no means stabilised. On the other hand they show us that these same categories were by no means totally excluded from urban areas despite official colonial policy. The implication here is that the authorities had been inclined, or forced, to acknowledge the existence of these groups, and to make some sort of provision for them. Though, as we have already seen, urban policy was going through some sort of transition at this stage with a trend towards the stabilisation of the workforce, the very

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:67)

existence of Malota (with the peculiar demographic composition that McCulloch described) suggests that the need for such policies had been obvious for a much longer period of time, and that the authorities had been, reluctantly perhaps, aware of this. It is difficult to know twenty five years later whether Malota was a consciously devised institution set up by the authorities at the local level in order to introduce flexibility into a policy imposed on them from above; or whether it was an administrative anachronism which the local population took advantage of. My own impression is that it was principally the latter, with the municipal authorities taking a passive role by tacitly accepting the position because they could not provide, or even see, an adequate alternative. What is certain, however, is that the compound's unique demographic characteristics were a result of its unusual role within the overall urban housing policy. This can be most dramatically shown by the consideration of one particular measure, the compound's sex ratio.

### 6:3 Sex Ratios in African Urban Areas

One of the most universal features noted by researchers in urban Africa has been the numerical preponderance of men over women. Relative to other developing areas such as South America and Asia, where 58% and 40% respectively of the total female population live in towns, Africa's women are under-represented in urban areas



with only 17% of them living there.<sup>1</sup> Within Africa (and, as we shall see, within countries and even individual towns) there is great variation in this imbalance with figures as high as 213 males per 100 females in Kenya, and as low as 112 per 100 in Accra.<sup>2</sup> In regional terms, West Africa tends to have the most balanced ratio, and East Africa has on average the greatest preponderance of men.<sup>3</sup> Needless to say, there are a number of exceptions. Di Giacomo and Stanley found that women outnumbered men in Addis Ababa and concluded that an excess of women over men was a characteristic of many pre-industrial cities.<sup>4</sup> These exceptions are, however, relatively few and the numerical dominance of women by men is a virtual 'given' in urban research in Africa.

This has been particularly so in Zambia where colonial urban policy was, in practice at least, frequently centred on the exclusion, or very reluctant acceptance, of women in towns. Over the years there was a good deal of vacillation on the question of the role of women in towns but, despite the occasional efforts of some of the mining companies and certain individuals, the commitment was to migrant labour and consequently a predominantly male society in the towns. The policy was based on two main assumptions: that Africans should retain their

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<sup>1</sup> Youssef (1976:70)

<sup>2</sup> Little (1973:10)

<sup>3</sup> Gugler (1971:15)

<sup>4</sup> Di Giacomo and Stanley (1960) quoted in Gugler (1971:16)

rural links; and that work in the modern employment sector could only be done by men. If women had any role at all, it was to provide a stable environment for their husbands.

When the emphasis began to change in the post-war period, women began to move into the urban areas in increasing numbers and on the Copperbelt, for example, between 1948 and 1951 "the number of African miners who lived with their wives in the towns owned by the mining companies increased by one-half."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, McCulloch noted in Livingstone that there was a "very large proportion of married men who had their wives living with them" on the town's Municipal Compound.<sup>2</sup> These comments can be deceiving. On the Municipal Compound, for example, the sex ratio remained very high at 182 males to every 100 females, slightly higher than for the town as a whole. This was because women still only had an indirect right to be in town; they were normally dependent upon their husbands, and their generally poor level of education, the very limited job opportunities, and various forms of restrictive legislation ensured that they remained so.

Livingstone at the time of McCulloch's study had a particularly high sex ratio compared with other urban areas in Northern Rhodesia (See Table 6.1). There were a number of factors that contributed to this. McCulloch pointed to the relationship between age groups and sex

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1971a:143)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:67)

TABLE 6.1

SEX RATIOS ON SELECTED COMPOUNDS IN LIVINGSTONE;  
LIVINGSTONE; THE COPPERBELT: 1951-1969

AREA	Number of Men per 100 Women	
	1951	1969
Malota	109	108
Maramba	182	118
Zambezi Sawmills	228	118
Livingstone	171	119
Copperbelt	128	109

Sources: The 1951 figures for Livingstone and its compounds are from McCulloch (1956:70)  
The 1951 figure for the Copperbelt is derived from Mitchell's 1951 survey as quoted in McCulloch (1956:15)  
The 1969 figures are from the 1969 Census returns.

ratios as being a primary factor in the variation between Livingstone and the Copperbelt. In Livingstone, men outnumbered women in all age groups in contrast to the Copperbelt where this was only the case in the over-thirty age category. McCulloch explained the difference by reference to two main factors: the large number of Tonga/Toka men in Livingstone, and the role of Livingstone as a 'relay' town. She suggested that the Tonga/Toka, who are the dominant group in the nearby Southern Province, were archetypal 'target' workers who came to town when they were very young and stayed only a relatively short period of time. They had no intention of staying in town longer than necessary, and would leave as soon as they had



acquired sufficient capital to set up as farmers in what is a relatively prosperous cash cropping area. This means that many of the men from this group are single, and that there is a disproportionately high percentage of them in the 15-24 age category. As a result, in the Southern Province "the outmigration of women was almost non-existent".<sup>1</sup> McCulloch argued that this group of young, single, or unaccompanied Southern Province men altered the balance between the sexes in the town. The other factor was the position of the town on the migration route to the South. McCulloch commented that: "Men migrating southwards from all areas pass through the town, and some spend a few years there before proceeding southwards."<sup>2</sup> She suggested that these men were mainly younger and in the early stages of their migratory career but, because of the lack of job opportunities and lower wages in the town, Livingstone was for many of them nothing more than a temporary stopover. Such men, even if they were married, would be likely to wait until they had found something more settled before they brought their women into the town. These two factors were undoubtedly contributory, but there is a third factor, which McCulloch does not consider, that I feel might be of even greater importance. This relates to the type of employer (and employment) in existence in the town at the time. The two largest employers were the Zambezi Sawmills and the

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1974:65)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:17)

Railways. Both had large compounds for their employees, the populations of them making up almost 20% of McCulloch's sample. Both these compounds were notable for the very large percentage of 'grass widowers' living there. In each case, almost one-third of the men were married but living apart from their wives. This compared with figures of only 9% for the Municipal Compound and less than 6% for Malota. The inevitable result of this was high sex ratios.<sup>1</sup> This was particularly the case on the Sawmills Compound where there was also a disproportionately high percentage of men in the 15-24 age category, and a resultant sex ratio of 228 men to every 100 women. The very high proportion of grass widowers can primarily be explained by the high proportion of what McCulloch terms the 'Other Bilateral' group of tribes - i.e. the collection of tribes, other than the Lozi, who live in Barotseland in Western Zambia. On both compounds they make up about one-third of the population, compared with 18% for the town as a whole. This group contains substantially less married men, and twice as many grass widowers, as any other group. Two factors were probably responsible for this. Firstly, the regulations controlling Barotse women were even stronger than elsewhere in Northern

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting point to be noted here that throws some doubt on McCulloch's first argument is that the Railways Compound has many more Southern Province men than the Sawmills, but a much lower sex ratio.

Rhodesia<sup>1</sup> and, secondly, this group were the poorest paid of any of the groups in the town with nearly three-quarters of them being labourers. Combined, these two factors were probably a substantial deterrent to women coming into town. A similar situation is to be found on the small conglomeration of mainly employers' compounds that come under the category of 'Other Compounds' in McCulloch's study.<sup>2</sup> Once again, there was a high proportion of 'grass widowers' and a resultant sex ratio of 207 males per 100 females. In this case, however, the explanation cannot be attributed to the dominance of Barotseland workers. The dominant group on these other compounds was the group from the Western Province.<sup>3</sup> The interesting factor here, however, is that, next to the 'other Bilateral' group, the Western Province tribes were the poorest paid in the town, and similarly had a high proportion of labourers. In fact, combined, these two groups provide over half the labourers in the town. In view of these factors then, it seems likely to me that the important influence that is common to all these compounds is the high proportion of poorly paid labourers, and the large percentage of men who have not brought

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<sup>1</sup> Women were only allowed to travel with a pass from the Barotse authorities and this could only be obtained when their husband was in employment. Added to this "councillors are periodically sent from Barotseland to collect women who are in town without permission and escort them personally back home." [McCulloch (1956:19)]

<sup>2</sup> A list of these are given in McCulloch (1956:11)

<sup>3</sup> The Mbunda, Nkoya, Luchazi, Luvale, Kaonde, and Chokwe.



their wives with them. The immediate conclusion here is that many men simply could not afford to bring their wives to Livingstone. This may, however, be an oversimplification of the problem. It may well be that migrants prefer their wives to remain in the rural areas where they can maintain a farm in order to supplement their husband's low income, and also ensure that at a future date when the migrant might find himself sick or unemployed (a probable event if he is an unskilled labourer), he has some form of income to fall back on. As Garbett points out, "in sickness or in old age, a man's only ultimate security is to be able to return to subsist on the land."<sup>1</sup> In summary then, I would suggest that the employers' compounds tended to have high sex ratios because their population tended to be dominated by poorer labourers who frequently left their wives in their rural homes.

The essential difference between the Copperbelt and Livingstone, it seems to me, was to be found in the attitudes towards housing on the part of employers. Livingstone's Municipal Compound may well have been accommodating an increasing number of women as a result of policy changes, but Livingstone's employers were slower to change. Berger has commented that: "When the Government and employers belatedly recognised in the mid-1950s that large-scale permanent urban settlement was a reality, a pattern of living had been established for African

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<sup>1</sup> Garbett (1975:116-117)

workers which was not easily changed - or improved."<sup>1</sup> But the mining companies had been well aware for many years of the potential advantages and disadvantages of allowing women and children into town. They not only had their own experiences (some companies never discouraged women), but they also had a wealth of comparisons available in the Congo, Southern Rhodesia, and South Africa. With their enormous facilities and organizational capacity, the companies were in a much better position to decide on, and relatively quickly put into practice, new policies. It is no coincidence that Heisler's earlier comment on the dramatic influx of women onto the Copperbelt related only to mining compounds. In contrast, the Livingstone employers had always tended to take the 'labour camp' approach, providing mainly barrack-type housing. Nor did the smaller companies have the capital available to change overnight. Thus it would not be until well into the late 1950s that the new policies would be put into practice as far as housing was concerned. As a result, women would still have difficulty in moving in with their husbands.

Thus in analysing the reasons for the generally high preponderance of men over women in Livingstone at the beginning of the 1950s, it is necessary to take into account the origins and distribution of the town's population, the physical location of the town, and the nature of the available employment opportunities. But what then

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1972:100)

of Malota? In the midst of a particularly male dominated town, we have a compound with a sex ratio, 109 males for every 100 females, that stood out in contrast even to the relative balance of the Copperbelt towns. What was the source of this balance?

Though she does not pursue the point in any great detail, McCulloch does contribute a number of suggestions. She points out that Malota was the only place in Livingstone where an unmarried woman could defeat the employment/housing equation used by the authorities, and find accommodation.<sup>1</sup> She also points out that it was possible for women to inherit plots from their husbands. Though these factors do not, in themselves, contribute greatly to the actual number of women on the compound, they do suggest a very different attitude towards the presence of women in town, one in which a woman's role need not necessarily be defined in terms of her husband. This potential independence was extended by the opportunities that Malota provided for self-employment amongst women.

Women in towns are frequently expected to contribute to the household budget in order to maintain even basic subsistence levels, but on the other hand they tend, even now, to be excluded from the wage employment sector. Their response is to turn to self-employment.<sup>2</sup> Frequently, however, and this was certainly the case in Living-

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:19). She recorded very few employed women, though she does mention a nurse who obtained a house through her job.

<sup>2</sup> See Little (1973:31-38); Papanek (1976:60)



stone in 1952, regulations prohibit women from setting up their own businesses (or at least make it very difficult for them). Even after independence, in legal residential areas in Lusaka, "the main forms of female self-employment were still subject to official harassment".<sup>1</sup> As with men, Malota was the one place in Livingstone where women could become self-employed and could, if they wished, run businesses from their own (or their husbands') plots. This was, inevitably, a major attraction both to men and women for "some men were reluctant to live with women who did not have jobs because the level of male wages was determined with a view to the needs of bachelors and not heads of family units."<sup>2</sup> Though I have no data to show the exact effect that this had on the compound's sex ratio, it is interesting to note the finding in Lusaka that, in those illegal squatter areas where there were self-employed women, the sex ratio was 116 compared with the official housing areas figure of 128 males per 100 females.<sup>3</sup> These opportunities for women on Malota must have acted as an encouragement to men to bring their wives into town. Indeed situations can be envisaged where this possibility of further income might have persuaded individuals to choose Malota, even when accommodation was available elsewhere. To a limited extent then, women were less dependent on their husbands

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:74-75)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:67-68)

<sup>3</sup> Seymour (1976:75)

if they lived on Malota, and they had a number of options that were not available elsewhere in the town.

McCulloch's data shows us that the number of single men on Malota was low, only 18% of adult males, and that nearly 60% of the adult male population was over 35 years of age compared with a figure of 37% for the town as a whole.<sup>1</sup> The compound also had the highest percentage of permanently stabilised adult men. It is not particularly surprising therefore that there should be more married men, more wives, more children and so on. But why is the compound so radically different in the first place? The answer lies in the compound's employment structure. This will be dealt with in more detail at a later stage of this chapter but, briefly, the major difference between Malota and other compounds was the highly disproportionate numbers of traders and skilled workers who made up almost two-thirds of the compound's adult male population. Almost two-thirds of the town's traders and 28% of its skilled workers lived on Malota.<sup>2</sup> A massive 43% of the compound's men came into the skilled category. McCulloch's data shows that, of all the occupational groupings, these two tend on average to be the oldest, the best paid, and the most occupationally mobile. These are, of course, related factors. Skills and capital can only be accumulated over a period of time,

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:70)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:71). McCulloch, because of the lack of highly skilled workers, merges the two categories 'skilled' and 'semi-skilled'.

and migrants arriving in town for the first time are unlikely to find employment either as traders or skilled workers. But why should these two groups find Malota so attractive? With traders it was a relatively straightforward matter. In 1952, 95% of them were self-employed. Most of the compounds in the town were employment-based, and even the Municipal Compound was heavily oriented towards those who earned an income from an employer. Added to this, municipal bye-laws severely restricted trading except on Malota, though there were some traders on the Municipal Compound. As a result, trading and Malota went hand in hand. Traders were not the only self-employed workers. The physical layout of Malota's plots made them a very practical base for small businesses because they were large enough to allow small workshops as well as residential units. The category of 'skilled worker' includes such skills as tailoring, blacksmithing, and carpentering, all of them skills which may be used either in the wage sector or in the pursuit of self-employment. For much the same reasons as traders, self-employed craftsmen find Malota the most preferable, if not the only, option. These men helped to make up the large proportion of skilled men on the compound. The large group of employed, skilled workers had different motives for being on the compound. As we will see, many of them preferred to rent their own accommodation on Malota rather than accept housing offered them by their employers. This gave them a security which their job situations frequently lacked, and also the flexibility and independence that



many of them desired.

The physical and administrative structure of Malota made it very attractive, even essential, to these two groups. In these groups, because of the very nature of the jobs, the men were likely to be older and therefore more frequently married; to be able to remain settled in town longer because they were not so subject to the whims of employers; and to be better paid, thus having the financial resources to bring their family into town. On top of this, by living on Malota they had much more scope to provide accommodation according to their own individual needs. Combined, all these factors meant that it was more likely that a man would have a wife and children, that he would have the resources to look after them, and that he would be able to provide adequate accommodation for them. This must inevitably have had an important effect on the compound's sex ratio.

A consideration of the factors affecting sex ratios in 1952 shows us a number of things apart from the limited role that women were allowed to play in towns at that time. One thing in particular that it demonstrates is that, though Heisler might claim that in 1945 and 1946 "the decision was taken to build instead the infrastructure for a settled urban society",<sup>1</sup> the ability to put policy changes into practice varied greatly between regions and between towns within Zambia. It also demonstrates that peculiar local factors may have an even greater effect than any high-level policy decisions. But

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<sup>1</sup> Heisler (1971a:125)

this is to take the subject out of its historical context, and does not negate the possibility that the differences were essentially one of degree, and that the trend towards a more balanced urban sex ratio that was noticeable on the Copperbelt was in fact universal throughout the country.

By the time of the 1969 Census, very definite and universal trends were obvious as can be seen from Table 6.1. Though most of the housing areas in Livingstone still had men outnumbering women, the ratios were much reduced and in no case exceeded 120 males per 100 females.<sup>1</sup> As has already been stated, women appear to have moved into towns in larger numbers than men in the years immediately after independence. This was particularly pronounced in Livingstone, for example, where in the twelve months before the 1969 Census the female population increased by 15.8% compared with a figure of 10.4% for the male population.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to tell whether this is mainly women coming into town to join their husbands, or whether independence has brought about significant changes in the role of women in urban areas. In general terms, African women make up only a small proportion of industrial workers, with rarely more than 10%, and frequently less than 4% of them being involved.<sup>3</sup> It has actually been

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<sup>1</sup> Ohadike (1969:111) has calculated that in 1963 the sex ratio for all urban areas in Northern Rhodesia was down to 128 males per 100 females.

<sup>2</sup> 1969 Census, p.B30

<sup>3</sup> Little (1976:80)

argued that a country's development may well have an adverse effect on women and that "modernization may maximise the differentiation of sex roles and enhance the status of men while lowering that of women."<sup>1</sup> The statistics on the subject are difficult to interpret. Heisler, for example, comments that:

The cash earnings of women are a startling new fact revealed by the 1969 Census. One reason is that the nationalist turmoil of the 1960s did much to smash the conservatism of women, and of men's attitudes towards women, and so their cultural lag behind men in adjusting to capitalism seems to be on the point of vanishing.<sup>2</sup>

One of the problems is to have a realistic definition of work. As Papanek points out: "It is clear that the work of women is not accurately reflected in statistics concerning the labour force, because only part of it is carried out in those sectors of the economy which these statistics are designed to measure."<sup>3</sup> For example, according to the 1969 Census figures, 16.2% of women in Livingstone were 'working' and another 12.9% were 'seeking work'. Of those who were working, about half came into the category 'Unpaid Family Worker' (that is women who worked without pay in the family business), 5% were self-employed, and the rest were employees. As a group, women made up 6.8% of all employees in Livingstone, almost exactly the same as the figure for all urban areas in the

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<sup>1</sup> Youssef (1976:72)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1974:33)

<sup>3</sup> Papanek (1976:57)



country.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the wage-earning sector, it is obvious that women still play a limited role. One of the problems has been that there may have been a noticeable increase in the number of jobs available, but there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of women to take them. However, the fact that as much as 30% of women, if we include those who are seeking work, are involved in some way in the work sector is suggestive of some sort of change. The role given to women previously had been, at the most, a passive one. Women were only to move to town to join their men, and then only if regulations and policies allowed them to do so. Little has forcefully argued that a substantial difference has arisen in the attitudes of women, and that many of them have rejected this passive role. He says:

Irrespective of how their traditional role is construed, African women are now on the march. They wish for themselves a significant place in the new society taking shape, and these aspirations have been fed by the spread of urban influences into the countryside. In fact, urbanization and the women's efforts to alter their position go hand in hand because the growth of urban economic and other institutions automatically holds out new and extra opportunities of achieving status.<sup>2</sup>

He, like Heisler,<sup>3</sup> feels that in the present day situation the women have potentially more to gain from urban life than men, and that they are probably less inclined, having reached town, to leave again. Though this might be an

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<sup>1</sup> 1969 Census, pp. B55,59

<sup>2</sup> Little (1973:180)

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1973:196)

overstatement of the argument, there is no doubt that we can no longer view the movement of women to, and their stay in, towns from the assumption that they remain in town only as long as their husbands agree.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any question that, in any decisions made about movement to, from, and between towns, women will play a positive role. Thus the trend towards a balance between the sexes in Zambian towns is not just a question of the removal of regulations at independence allowing women to move into town to join their husbands. The removal of colonial restrictions has enabled women to become an integral part of the migration to, and growth of, towns.

The sex ratio in urban areas varies greatly according to a number of factors, both local and national. It varies between geo-political units; within a nation-state; between urban and rural areas; between towns, age-groups, occupations, and so on. Given these variations, however, we have seen that in Zambia it has principally, and almost without exception, varied over time. The last twenty years has shown an unmistakable trend towards a balancing of the ratio between men and women. This can be attributed to a number of changes which have removed constraints, opened up options, and brought about a number of attitudinal changes on the part of both men and women towards the role of women in town. The one exception to all this has been Malota. Throughout all these changes, the compound's sex ratio has remained virtually

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<sup>1</sup> See Kapferer (1966:55); McCulloch (1956:62)

unaltered, and it has taken even the Copperbelt twenty years to approach it. I have tried in this section to show that changes in a demographic measure such as the sex ratio reflect a variety of changes, and are linked up with alterations in other demographic measures. Does the lack of change in Malota's sex ratio mean that it has not changed in other respects, that it has virtually stood still whilst the remainder of Zambia has caught up? It is to this question that I now wish to turn.

#### 6:4 Composition of Plots on Malota: 1952 - 1971

It has repeatedly been stressed that major changes occurred in urban areas when colonial regulations were removed, and that a more flexible approach was taken towards the renting and building of accommodation. Before this, Malota had been well ahead of the times in that it had not tied housing to employment, had not excluded women, and had allowed continuity of tenancy despite unemployment and even death. But a number of changes were inevitable, even on Malota, and these were particularly noticeable in the field of plot tenancy. The available data on this subject for 1952, 1961, and 1971 are not always strictly comparable, mainly because things have changed so much. For example, McCulloch and Reynolds, with very few exceptions, were not dealing with sub-tenants, tenants, or 'sleeping' landlords, and their infrequent comments on these matters tend to refer only to the lack of these categories. By reworking the data it is, however, possible to see a number of trends, and these are summarised



in Table 6.2.

TABLE 6.2  
COMPOSITION OF PLOTS ON MALOTA: 1952 and 1971

Category	1952	%	1971
Children	34.6		45.9
Landlords	24.9		8.3
Sleeping Landlords	N/A		1.7
Tenants	N/A		1.3
Sub-tenants	N/A		14.2
<u>Co-residents</u>			
Wives	21.8		
Others	19.0	40.8	28.5
TOTAL	100.3		99.9

Sources: McCulloch (1956:70); Municipal Survey household returns 1971.<sup>1</sup>

Note: N/A is 'Not Applicable'.

The most obvious change is in the category of 'landlord', that is the person who normally lives on his plot and pays rent directly to the Council. As a percentage of the total population, this category has been reduced in significance by two-thirds. McCulloch assumed in 1952 that all the plots had resident landlords, and

<sup>1</sup> As I have said, the two sets of data are not strictly comparable and a certain amount of caution has to be used in interpreting them. McCulloch's data are based only on a 10% sample and some of her total projections, e.g. total population, can only be approximate. Figures such as wives, which are derived from these projections, must therefore also be approximate. However, I have tried to make satisfactory allowances for this and feel that the inaccuracies are minimal, certainly not enough to negate the overall conclusions.

Reynolds' findings essentially support this, though he did find a small number of plots where it was possible that tenants had been installed. At the very most, however, this would represent less than one per cent of the total population. For the 1952 situation, therefore, I have taken there to be one landlord for every plot. The dramatic change over the next twenty years came about for two reasons. Firstly, there are of course a fixed (or relatively so) number of plots and, as such, there is a definite maximum number of people who can pay rent directly to the Council - one for each plot. As a result, any increase at all in the number of people on the compound will lead to a decrease in the proportional significance of landlords. This has been exaggerated by the second factor, the appearance of what I have called 'sleeping' landlords and tenants who have reduced the number of resident landlords by over 25%. But even without this, the 126% increase in the population would still have meant that the proportion of Malotans who could actually rent a plot from the Council would have been severely restricted. The significance is that, whereas one person in four living on Malota in 1952 was able to regard their plot as their own, in 1971 less than one in twelve could do so. In more general terms, it represented a significant change in the role of landlords on the compound, and the position of Malota within the overall housing framework in Livingstone.

The term 'landlord' is deceptive, suggesting as it does an individual who rents out property. In the early days of Malota the compound had been little more than a

working man's hostel, and the people living there could not, in any way, be seen as landlords.<sup>1</sup> Access to the available accommodation was based on the individual's ability to contribute directly to the goals of those who had built and administered the compound.

The introduction of the lease system in the 1930s brought in the idea of what might best be described as the plot-holder. From now on the emphasis was placed on the renting of land, rather than accommodation, to the individuals and, though rules and regulations prevented the plot-holder from doing many things (including becoming a landlord in his own right), it gave them a good deal of flexibility and a certain element of independence that had not existed before, and which did not exist anywhere else in the town. Within certain limits set by the authorities, the individual plot-holder had a resource which could be used by him to his own advantage.<sup>2</sup> As we have seen, the result was that many of the people who moved onto the compound were those who did not contribute directly to the colonial goals.<sup>3</sup> One of the consequences was a high proportion of women and children, and the impression gained

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<sup>1</sup> A cynical, but maybe realistic, view of the actual role of Malota's earlier inhabitants is given in the following comment from Native Affairs 1937,46 which recommends the need to provide native labour with a "more balanced diet during their detention in the Livingstone compound" (My emphasis).

<sup>2</sup> It is for this reason that Reynolds' term 'Occupiers' is too passive and does not give a real impression of their role.

<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that they did not serve a very useful purpose within the town. Often they were indispensable.



is that the compound was, to a very great extent, centred around the family rather than the individual male migrant. 19% of the compound's population did not fit into the categories based on the nuclear family, i.e. landlords, children and wives.<sup>1</sup> Using McCulloch's data we find that these are mainly male, and from the comments of both McCulloch and Reynolds it would seem that they are mainly relatives who were seeking work, alternative accommodation, or just visiting. McCulloch mentions that some "lease-holders who build second houses on their plots have relatives and workmates living with them, although this is not officially permitted."<sup>2</sup> It is of course possible that a certain degree of sub-tenancy existed, but was not admitted. Plot-holders discovered renting out rooms were likely to lose their leases, and it was normally a last option that was based on personal obligation rather than simple monetary advantage. It was therefore very rare, if it existed at all. Plot-holders were allowed to take in short-term visitors, but in this case the 3d a week lodgers' fee went directly to the municipality rather than to the plot-holder himself. In 1961, about 5% of the compound's total population was made up of these visitors. The remainder of the co-residents on the plots were mainly relatives of the plot-holder. McCulloch, speaking of

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<sup>1</sup> In order to make the figure for 'wives' as accurate as possible, I have noted McCulloch's comments on polygyny (1956:20).

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:5)

Livingstone as a whole, comments that:

Nearly 18% of the married quarters in the sample contained such co-residents, the greatest proportion being in the Grass Compound. Almost all were relatives of either the household head or his wife, and the majority were children who had come to town to attend school.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years later, Reynolds found very much the same situation when he noted that:

In all but a few cases (friends, servants) the residents of a stand are related to the Occupier, either directly or by marriage. Naturally the majority are wives and offspring. Parents and brothers and sisters are also to be found, and it is to be noted that nephews particularly are resident.<sup>2</sup>

We can see that the relative freedom in this second stage of the compound's development brought about a change from male domination imposed as a result of the needs of the authorities, to a kin-orientation which reflected the ability of the individual to make a number of limited choices according to his needs. It was this range of options that made the compound into a refuge from inflexible housing policies.

Apart from the landlords, the third stage of Malota's development - as shown in the 1971 figures in Table 6.2 - presents three other significant changes. Firstly, the proportion of children, always high compared with the rest of the town, increased by over 10% to 46% of the total population. The most likely explanation for this lies in a change in infant mortality rates. McCulloch

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:22)

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:4). This is supported by McCulloch's figures (1956:79)

noted that Livingstone appeared to have the highest level of infant mortality of any town or provincial area in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup> In 1951 there were less children on Malota in the 5-14 age category than in the 0-4 group. This was exaggerated by a tendency to send children back to the rural areas as they got older. Schooling facilities in the 1950s were very limited, growing children an economic burden in town, and as they got older they became increasingly useful in the rural areas. As health and educational facilities have, comparatively speaking, improved; as wage levels have increased; and as the urban population has become more stabilised, the number of children on Malota has increased in proportion, to the extent that it is now in line with the figure for the country as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

The second major change is, as we saw in the previous chapter, the emergence of sub-tenancy. It is at this point that the compound began to acquire 'landlords' in the literal sense of the word. The rights given to an individual by virtue of renting land from the Council could now be turned to direct monetary advantage. This does not happen, and is not allowed, in any of the other housing areas in the town.<sup>3</sup> Researchers have noted the similar emergence of this phenomenon on two of Lusaka's earlier

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:17)

<sup>2</sup> 1969 Census, p. B29.

<sup>3</sup> An illegal construction workers' compound near to Malota, but outside of the town's boundaries, appears to have a number of sub-tenants.



unaided self-help schemes, New Kanyama and Chibolya, where figures indicate "the growth of a private rented housing market in these two areas, where the City Council has not succeeded in enforcing rules forbidding sub-letting of Council houses or plots."<sup>1</sup> Chibolya seems to bear some resemblance to Malota in the sense that "any control which had initially been exercised over the siting of buildings had not been strictly applied more recently and the layout resembles that of an unauthorised rather than an authorised area."<sup>2</sup> Surveys of New Kanyama showed extensive sub-letting of property. In both cases, the original purposes of the housing areas had been extended by the residents themselves. Without the strict enforcement of the various controls and regulations, the areas came to serve a valuable function within the city housing market. Once they became established in this way, their populations grew so large that there was "little hope of demolishing them and resettling the population elsewhere when the official housing programme was constantly lagging behind the demand."<sup>3</sup> There is of course an element of a spiral to this problem. A shortage of housing leads to sub-tenancy which then increases the compound's population to the extent that the compound cannot be replaced, yet at the same time the resultant overcrowding makes it even more imperative that it should be replaced. The liberali-

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<sup>1</sup> Development, Planning and Research Unit (1972:39)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 72

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 76-77

sation of housing rules (however unintended) brought about sub-tenancy on Malota, but the same act also took some of the emphasis off Malota as a refuge. Jobs were less frequently tied to housing and, though employers' compounds remain, the concentration has been on the development of municipal housing, open to all those who can afford it. However, the very great number of people arriving in the town during the 1960s has more than compensated for this. Housing shortages, rather than housing standards, have become the focus of attention. The question of spare rooms repeatedly crops up in conversations in the market, the beerhall, and the bars, and high prices can be obtained by anyone who does have spare accommodation. As a result, Malota has become a place not only for men looking for a plot for their family, but also for younger men who need temporary housing.

The third change is in the proportional significance of co-residents who, as a percentage, are now two-thirds of what they were in 1952.<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that they have decreased in number for there are actually 60% more in real terms than they were twenty years ago. Lack of sufficiently detailed data makes it difficult to do anything more than hypothesise. As far as wives are concerned, I would suggest that the increase in the proportion of children and younger men is bound to decrease the proportional significance of this category, though the large

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<sup>1</sup> It is an unfortunate aspect of the 1971 Municipal Survey that it includes no data on wives. Indeed the final report mentions women only once, and then only in a metaphorical way.

increase in total population means that there are undoubtedly more of them in real terms. The other co-residents, who will normally be relatives or close friends (otherwise they would be paying rent), have probably not increased much in real terms. In the same way as the number of landlords is restricted by the number of plots available, so are their relatives and they are very unlikely to increase in real terms, despite overall changes in population figures. The changes of the last twenty years mean that it is neither easier, nor more difficult, for a plot-holder to have his relatives to stay with him. Combined, I believe these two factors are mainly responsible for the decrease in the statistical significance of the co-residents.

In the third stage of its development, Malota has remained in one sense a refuge. This time, however, it is from the considerable post-independence housing shortage, rather than housing policy as such. Many of the people now living on Malota could easily live elsewhere if the housing was available, and these are the people to whom sub-tenancy is particularly attractive. This is not to say that those categories to whom Malota used to be important are not still living on the compound. The traders and self-employed workers, for example, still see Malota as the main option, as do many older people and, to a certain extent, unaccompanied women. But the compound's population has become more heterogeneous, attracting a wider range of people.



## 6:5 Age Distribution on Malota

One of the major effects of this increased heterogeneity has been to substantially alter the age distribution on the compound between 1952 and 1971. I have already noted McCulloch's comments on the unusually high proportion of younger migrants in Livingstone at the time of her study, and discussed her explanations. As a result of these factors, 28.8% of the town's adult male population lay in the 15-24 age category compared with only 23.3% on the Copperbelt (See Table 6.3). In the 25-34 category the situation was reversed with figures of 41.9% on the Copperbelt and 33.9% in Livingstone. This meant that both areas had over 60% of their adult male population under the age of 35. This was not particularly surprising. Men came into town in order to work, and it was only therefore to be expected that the majority of them would be found in the lower age groups. From the age of 40 onwards, a man's job prospects tended to diminish quite rapidly, and a return to his rural home became, increasingly, a likely alternative if a decision had to be made. At this stage of a man's migratory career, unemployment was more drastic and the possibility of further intra-urban or inter-urban moves more remote. For example, men who came into town in their youth, maybe with great ambitions, but who have been unable to maintain a job for any period of time, or who have been unable to acquire any skills, will find it an increasingly attractive proposition to return to their rural homes. One would therefore expect to find an increasing number of migrants after the age of

15, reaching a peak probably in the 25-34 age group and declining slowly in the 35-44 category, with a rapid acceleration after the age of 45. This general trend is shown in the early 1950s' figures for Livingstone and the Copperbelt, despite the previously mentioned variations between the two areas.

TABLE 6.3

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ADULT MALE POPULATION:  
THE COPPERBELT, LIVINGSTONE, AND MALOTA -1951/2

Age Group	Copperbelt	Livingstone	Malota	(%)
15 - 24	23.3	28.7	20.9	
25 - 34	41.9	33.9	20.9	
35 - 44	27.4	22.4	28.4	
45-plus	7.5	15.0	29.8	
TOTAL	100.1	100.0	100.0	

Source: McCulloch (1956: 15,70)

It is equally apparent from Table 6.3 that the situation on Malota was very different from either the Copperbelt or Livingstone, with the peak not being reached until the 45-plus age category. There are a number of possible explanations for this. At that time it was necessary, in order to obtain a plot on Malota, to buy the property from the existing plot-holder. This, of necessity, meant a capital investment which would not be attractive, or even feasible, to many young men beginning their employment careers. In the case of Southern Province men, for

example, it would have been positively contradictory. The compound, as a result, had the lowest proportion of this group, 6.2% compared with 18% for the town as a whole.<sup>1</sup> Younger men were normally looking for a wage-earning job, and the possession of such work usually meant that one would have some form of accommodation on one of the other compounds. If it was not possible to obtain employment, the most reasonable action would be to move on to some other labour centre, rather than to invest capital in the hope that some form of employment would be forthcoming. Young men come into town primarily to gain a skill or to acquire cash, and in the pre-independence situation this necessitated finding employment. Malota was therefore the last place that they were likely to choose to live.

The difference at the other end of the spectrum, in the 45-plus age category, is even more striking, with the Malota figure being double that of Livingstone, and four times that of the Copperbelt. McCulloch attempted to explain the difference between Livingstone and the Copperbelt by reference to the fact that the former was an older settlement, and that the population would therefore be more stabilised. Malota is virtually as old as the town, and we therefore need some further explanation for the very significant difference between the town and the compound. If employment is tied to housing, an individual who is having difficulty finding work will also have trouble

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:70). McCulloch (*ibid.*, 32) uses the term 'Central Matrilineal' to describe the tribes of the Southern Province.



finding somewhere to stay in an urban area. As men get older, they become increasingly unacceptable to employers, and retirement becomes a valid alternative.<sup>1</sup> In 1952 this most frequently meant a return to the village. Even now, pension schemes and welfare services are far from being automatic - except in some of the large mining companies - and a man is expected to take advantage of the welfare system that his family and village should be able to provide. For example, a man who is ill may frequently return to his home, only returning to the urban situation when his health is restored. At the same time, less than 5% of men in the 35-44 age group remain unmarried, and an unmarried man has greater pressure placed on him to aim for security both of employment and housing.<sup>2</sup> With the passage of time, it becomes increasingly difficult to move to another urban area in order to find these things. By the age of 40 a man will have acquired a skill if he is ever going to do so, and his previous career will act more heavily as a constraint on his future expectations. If he has remained an unskilled labourer for over twenty years, it is unlikely that he will ever become anything more than this. Equally, a forty year old carpenter will rarely become a plumber or a blacksmith. Thus, as retirement becomes a realistic possibility, an individual is increasingly faced with the need to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of remaining in town. In certain ways, an

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<sup>1</sup> Kapferer (1972:105)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch (1956:20)

older man has a greater commitment to the urban situation than anyone else. He is probably at the end of a long urban career, and time itself is a form of investment. On the other hand, a young man who is just beginning his urban career still retains very active links with his rural background, and many of his expectations and values derive from a rural, rather than an urban, source. As a result, their commitment to a particular urban situation is frequently limited. Epstein has commented:

Obviously the pressures of the urban system do not weigh so heavily on the younger men who are still bachelors or have only recently married, and are relatively recent arrivals from the rural areas; and it is within this category that the highest rate of labour turnover is found.<sup>1</sup>

A newcomer is not committed to any great extent to a particular set of personal relationships within the urban context. Nor is he initially constrained in his search for employment by the acquisition of some sort of skill which would restrict the scope of the choices available to him. A man with a long experience of urban life has, on the other hand, an investment in such factors, and his commitment is often considerably greater. Yet, in 1952, he was still dependent upon security of housing and, therefore, in the majority of cases, employment. The security provided by a return to his rural home increasingly became a gain which balanced out the costs of giving up his investments in the urban situation, particularly the network of social relationships which had been developed over the

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1961:41)

period of his residence. As his employment possibilities deteriorate, this becomes the crucial factor in his ability to make a decision.<sup>1</sup>

With these things in mind, we can see that in the pre-independence situation Malota provided a very different, and very attractive alternative. Furthermore, by moving to the compound the individual increased his commitment to staying in town for he now became the owner of property, with the consequent security of accommodation. Also the plot was a potential source of income for, should he become unemployed, he not only retained his house but he could, if he so wished, set himself up in business. His continued existence in town was not therefore totally dependent upon an employer. The point at which the gains from returning to the village clearly outweighed the costs of leaving town were bound, therefore, to be different for inhabitants of Malota. The age distribution figures for Malota in 1952 suggest that fewer Malotans were forced to make this decision, or were at least able to postpone it to a much later point in their urban careers. I met a number of men on Malota who, when faced with the decision to leave town, searched out a plot on the compound as an attractive alternative to returning home. To some people, the cost of moving from one compound to another within the same town is much less than a complete break from urban life.

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion, see Kapferer (1972:103-113)



Data from Reynolds' 1961 survey cast further light on this subject, as is shown in Table 6.4. The most evident point is that Malota was very rarely the first place

TABLE 6.4

URBAN MOVEMENT OF PLOT-HOLDERS ON MALOTA

(Cumulative Percentages)	Towns	Movement to: Livingstone	Malota
Over 42 years ago	7.5	3.9	0.0
Over 32 years ago	28.2	14.6	4.5
Over 22 years ago	50.3	31.1	10.6
Over 12 years ago	85.1	63.1	31.8
Over 2 years ago	99.5	96.7	89.4
2 years ago or less	0.5	3.4	10.6

Source: Derived from Reynolds (1962:5)

that people stopped on their arrival in Livingstone. Only about one-third of the plot-holders who had arrived on the compound within the previous two years had been in Livingstone for less than two years. Similarly, though over half the plot-holders had first come into town over 22 years ago, only just over 10% had been on Malota for that period of time. This same trend is reflected throughout the data, which consistently suggests that arrival on Malota occurs at a later, frequently much later, stage of an individual's urban career. We can also see that a very large percentage of the plot-holders had been in urban areas for more than twelve years, a considerably greater figure than McCulloch had found for Livingstone's adult

male population ten years earlier.<sup>1</sup> A two-thirds majority of the sample had been on the compound for a comparatively medium length of time of between two and twelve years. Reynolds also found that over three-quarters of the plot-holders "rarely or never visit their home village", and of the 17% who claimed to return frequently he comments that "the supplementary question as to when they last visited showed that the intention is not always fulfilled."<sup>2</sup> In summary then, Reynolds' data are suggestive of a number of things that demonstrate the unique role played by Malota in the years before independence. The majority of plot-holders were older men who had spent a good deal of time in urban areas, and who had arrived on Malota only after considerable movement within Northern Rhodesia generally, and within Livingstone. It is obvious that Malota was not likely to be the first choice of migrants arriving in towns but one that would become increasingly attractive with the passage of time as individuals began to perceive the insecurity that age brings.

By 1971, the situation had changed radically, as we can see from Table 6.5. The 1971 figures for Malota are much more in line with the figures for the town as a whole twenty years previously, with a substantially greater proportion in the younger age categories. This

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<sup>1</sup> She calculated (1956:51) that only 47.1% of the town's men had had their first contact with urban life more than 10 years ago.

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:5)

TABLE 6.5

AGE STRUCTURE OF ADULT MALE POPULATION  
IN SELECTED AREAS: 1952-1971

Age Group	Pre-Independence (%)			Post-Independence		
	Copperbelt	Livingstone	Malota	Malota	Lusaka	Zambia
15-34	65.2	62.6	41.6	57.2	65.7	52.7
35-44	27.4	22.4	28.5	23.4	20.3	19.7
45- +	7.5	15.0	29.9	19.3	14.0	27.6
TOTAL	100.1	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0

Sources: Pre-Independence data from McCulloch (1956:15,69)  
Lusaka and Zambia from 1969 Census  
Post-Independence Malota from 1971 Municipal Council Survey

must be seen as reflecting the dramatic increase in the number of younger men who make up the majority of sub-tenants now living there.<sup>1</sup> It was the significance of the plot-holder, both socially and statistically, that was responsible for the abnormal proportion of older men on Malota before independence. The decline of this group, and the emergence of sub-tenancy has brought these changes in distribution. There is still, however, a bias towards the older age groups compared with Lusaka,<sup>2</sup> and this

<sup>1</sup> Reynolds does not give equivalent figures for 1961, but he does note that there were 168 'Occupiers' over the age of 40. As there were only 647 men living on the compound at that time, at least 41% of adult males were over the age of 40 which suggests that the proportion of men under the age of 35 remained comparatively low until at least 1961, and that the alteration in the age structure was a post-independence phenomenon.

<sup>2</sup> The appropriate figures for Livingstone itself were not available and I have used Lusaka because, according to Jackman (1973:22), "the age structure of population in line-of-rail urban Districts is striking similar, Lusaka being typical of them."



suggest that the compound landlords still tend to be older.

Before independence, many of the people who are now sub-tenants on Malota would have been absorbed into other compounds. As we will see later, the majority of adult males on the compound are now employed, and it is now apparent that a large proportion of the influx of the last decade are men with jobs, which contradicts the prevalent feeling in Livingstone that Malota's population is made up to a great extent by 'wasters'. In effect, we have a reversal of the situation which occurred when employment was tied to housing. The employer is not now, in the majority of cases, responsible for housing. Rather, the employee must find his own housing if he is to continue in his job. A very long waiting list makes it unlikely that he will get a place on a municipal housing area for some length of time, and he must therefore look to Malota as the only real alternative. A man with accommodation is a much more attractive proposition to an employer, and to some it is now a pre-requisite before they will take a man on. Employment has therefore, to a certain extent, become dependent upon housing rather than the reverse.

On the other hand, the renting out of plots has become an important source of income for many landlords. Single men in particular are not too choosy about where they live, and the capital investment for a landlord need not be too great. Sub-tenancy can provide some sort of income with little or no work involved. For men who are

retired, or whose employment situation is insecure, the sub-letting of their plot can be a very attractive proposition. It is once again these marginal categories who find possession of a plot so attractive, but the source of the attraction is different. It is not just a question of Malota being the only compound on which they might live - all municipal compounds are, theoretically, open to them<sup>1</sup> - but it now has certain positive features that make it the most desirable option. It is still therefore men in the later stages of their life, migratory and job careers who have the most to gain from obtaining a plot. Sub-tenancy is most attractive to younger, unaccompanied, men. Those men who are married and who wish to have their families with them are less likely to become sub-tenants. Landlords cannot obtain the same income from a man, his wife, and his children as they can from an equivalent number of single men. Not only is sub-tenancy preferable to young men, they are ~~most~~ attractive to landlords.

#### 6:6 Occupational Patterns on Malota

In discussing some of Malota's demographic characteristics, the question of employment, or the lack of it, has been frequently mentioned and is obviously intrinsically linked with these other matters. Colonial

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this is the group of self-employed men who wish to combine their residential and business premises. Municipal regulations prevent this on all compounds except Malota and, although they are broken, there are some businesses e.g. blacksmithing, which cannot easily be concealed. To such people, Malota is still the only option.

policy being what it was, this is hardly surprising. As with other factors that I have discussed, Malota's employment structure differed considerably from that in other housing areas in the pre-independence period, as can be seen from Table 6.6. Malota's distinction lies primarily

**TABLE 6.6**

**OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF ADULT MALE POPULATION:  
MALOTA AND LIVINGSTONE - 1952**

Occupation	Malota (%)	Livingstone
Domestics and Labourers	22.2	64.5
Traders	22.2	2.6
Supervisory	1.6	6.6
Skilled	42.9	18.8
White-Collar	1.6	4.6
Attending School	3.2	1.6
Unemployed	6.3	1.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: McCulloch (1956:71)

in the large number of traders and skilled workers, and the very low proportion of domestics and labourers, that there were at that time. I have already discussed traders and self-employed workers and it is to the skilled, employed workers that I now turn. The acquisition of a skill has always been a highly regarded thing in urban society giving, it is believed, a greater choice of jobs and more long-term security. It was felt that if a man had a skill behind him he would have no fear of unemployment



and therefore no housing problems. Why then would skilled workers prefer to live on Malota? By 'skilled workers', McCulloch was referring to "drivers, tailors, mechanics, and various workers in the building industry - painters, bricklayers, plumbers, carpenters etc."<sup>1</sup> These are skills that can be detached from the workplace and used in the general commercial sector. They allow considerably greater potential occupational and geographical mobility because they are skills that are of use in all urban centres. This is unlike skills learned in the mining sector, for example, which are not generally detachable from the place of work. Thus Kapferer comments:

The skill of commercial workers, because of its detachability from the place of employment, in contrast to skilled workers in other sectors, may not reduce their propensity to change jobs but in some cases could even increase it.<sup>2</sup>

McCulloch's data support this argument, for skilled workers had the highest average number of jobs and were second only to white-collar workers in their number of urban shifts. McCulloch says specifically of skilled workers that "artisans in particular, who are intermittently out of work, like to rent their own houses."<sup>3</sup> Skilled building workers - carpenters, plumbers etc. - often worked on short-term contracts after which they might be out of work for a period of time. I met a number of men on Malota who spoke of being 'between jobs', and

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:37)

<sup>2</sup> Kapferer (1972:111)

<sup>3</sup> McCulloch (1956:5)

whose occupational histories were scattered with the names of large-scale building contracts carried out in, and around, Livingstone over the years. A skill may, therefore, make it easier to obtain a job, but the individual may well have to accept the need for mobility. As a result, this group of workers would have been particularly affected by the inflexibility of colonial housing policy. Large contractors rarely provided anything more than temporary housing, and many of the smaller employers had neither the facilities nor the inclination to provide a compound. A house on the Municipal Compound would have been feasible whilst the individual was working but would quickly have become a heavy burden during the relatively frequent periods of unemployment. Accommodation on Malota, however, provided a house, security of tenure, and a potential source of income (skilled workers frequently being in the best position to set up in business for themselves), at very little cost. Because of these factors, one-quarter of Livingstone's skilled workers chose Malota as a preferable alternative to having to rely recurrently on employers, or being unable to pay rent when they found themselves without work. Many of Malota's 'businessmen' appear to have been skilled workers who had chosen, or been forced, either to leave the wage sector altogether, or to take up business whilst temporarily without employment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:70) suggests that this latter group might best be termed 'subsistence self-employed'.

The other unusual feature about the compound's employment structure in 1952 was the comparatively large number of men who were not employees. Under this heading comes traders and self-employed skilled workers, the unemployed, and those still attending school. McCulloch's figures do not show how many of the skilled workers were actually self-employed, and it is evident that a few of the traders were employees. As a result, we can only make the rough conclusion that at least one-third of the adult male population was not employed by someone else. This is, however, a much higher figure than for the rest of the town. It is sometimes difficult to make comparisons in this area because there is a good deal of confusion and controversy as to what exactly constitutes unemployment.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Heisler says that "it can hardly be said that unemployment exists in a country such as Zambia. Unemployment is a state when a member of a workforce is unable to work and cannot earn another income."<sup>2</sup> Starting with this assumption, he is able to conclude that, though data suggest that Zambia had an urban unemployment rate of 18% in 1963, this is only because the assumption is made that the sole possible income of urban dwellers is wage employment. If one starts with the idea that many migrants have continuing access to subsistence income, however, he concludes that the unemployment rate only works out at 3.1%.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parkin (1975:146-47)

<sup>2</sup> Heisler (1971b:433)

<sup>3</sup> Heisler (1971b:432)



The 1969 Census figures try to overcome these problems of definition by using three basic categories; 'working', 'seeking work', and 'not working'. The 'working' category was not based on income and therefore included self-employed, employees and 'unpaid family workers'.<sup>1</sup> Table 6.7 shows the employment structure of Livingstone in 1969 as compared with other urban areas.

TABLE 6.7

EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE OF LIVINGSTONE, LUSAKA,  
NDOLA, AND URBAN ZAMBIA - 1969

Employment Category	Livingstone	Ndola	Lusaka	Urban Zambia
<u>Working</u>				
Self-employed	4.8	6.3	5.1	5.7
Employee	65.2	68.0	65.6	63.4
Unpaid Family Worker	6.0	1.0	3.2	3.0
Employer	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.7
	<u>76.6</u>	<u>75.8</u>	<u>74.5</u>	<u>72.7</u>
<u>Seeking Work</u>	11.0	10.6	11.2	11.7
<u>Not Working</u>	12.4	13.4	14.3	15.6
TOTAL	100.1	99.9	100.0	100.1

Source: Derived from 1969 Census, pp. B55,B59.

As can be seen, the categories of self-employed, employed, and employer make up only between 70% and 75% of the total in the areas under discussion. In effect, this means that over a quarter of the adult male population is not working. Changes in policy now mean that a lack of work no longer,

<sup>1</sup> Defined as "those persons who worked without pay in the family business or on the family farm"

in any formal sense, prevents an individual from coming into, and remaining in, town. Unemployment, however it is defined, is therefore a major problem in towns.

Predictably enough, Malota is outside the general pattern for urban areas. I do not have data from the 1969 Census specifically for the compound, but the 1971 Municipal Survey does break down the male population into Employed, Self-employed, and Unemployed, providing figures of 59.5%, 25.5%, and 15.0% respectively for each of these categories. The major differences between Malota and the rest of the town lie in the latter two categories, self-employment and unemployment. Employers are included in the category of self-employed but it is not clear into which category unpaid family workers fit, though I suspect that it is the unemployed. Self-employment is still highly disproportionate but unemployment seems to have been reversed in the sense that, whereas previously it had appeared to be higher on Malota than elsewhere, it now seems to be lower, and does not seem to have been so affected by the general post-independence unemployment boom.

But, as I have said, the data in its present form does not lend itself to any really meaningful direct comparisons. It is possible, however, to derive a number of general hypotheses.

- 1) Malota is still a focus for self-employed workers to whom possession of a plot is a necessity.

2) Unemployment is not so predominant as elsewhere because such people are not excluded from other housing areas; because an unemployed man on Malota is more likely to move into the self-employed sector; and because on Malota one does not need to work to obtain some sort of income.

3) The large percentage of employed workers is due to the emergence of sub-tenancy.

In order to look more closely at these hypotheses, I have tried to approach the 1971 Municipal Survey data from a different perspective. The unique factor that brought about the unusual employment structure on pre-independence Malota was the relationship between tenancy and employment that prevailed on the compound at the time; more specifically, the radical difference between tenancy on Malota and elsewhere in Livingstone. I have therefore reworked the data from the 1971 Municipal Survey in terms of these two factors to see what changes have occurred in the employment structure as a result of the various changes that we have already noted in tenancy.

In Table 6.8 I have attempted to show the structure of employment categories in relation to individual plots on the compound. Thus, for example, 27.8% of the plots had no employed workers living there, and the 37.2% of plots that had only one employed person (irrespective of other categories) accounted for 28.8% of all employed individuals living on Malota. These figures are intended to give us some sense of how the different categories are distributed in terms of individual plots. Amongst the most striking aspects is the fact that nearly three-quarters of the plots (72.2%) had at least one



TABLE 6.8

CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYMENT ON INDIVIDUAL  
PLOTS ON MALOTA - 1971

Employment Category	Number of persons per plot in that category	Percentage of total occupied plots	Percentage of total number of persons in that category
<u>Employed</u>	0	27.8	0.0
	1	37.2	28.8
	2	21.2	32.8
	3-plus	13.8	38.4
		<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
<u>Self-employed</u>	0	55.6	0.0
	1	35.0	63.2
	2	8.1	29.3
	3-plus	1.3	7.5
		<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
<u>Unemployed</u>	0	74.2	0.0
	1	20.1	61.7
	2	4.6	28.2
	3-plus	1.1	10.1
		<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: Derived from household returns of 1971  
Municipal Survey

employed person living there, whereas only one-quarter had an unemployed person, and less than a half had a self-employed person. This dominance by employed workers is taken one step further when it is realised that over one-third of plots have two or more employed people there, compared with less than 10% in either of the two other categories. As a result, and this is crucial, two-thirds of employed workers on the compound (actually 71.2%) live in groups of two or more to a plot, whereas over 60% of both self-employed and unemployed workers are the sole

representative of that category on their plot. This supports the previous suggestions that many of the sub-tenants who have come on to the compound are employed workers, and that self-employment and unemployment are still dominated by the plot-holders. The 1952 situation was summarised, in very general terms, by suggesting that the 'average' plot tended to have an individual migrant, frequently self-employed, with his family, and maybe unemployed or visiting relatives. The data in Table 6.8 suggest a very different picture for they show that, not only are there a large number of employed men, but that they are distributed fairly evenly throughout the plots. It is not just a question of a small number of opportunistic 'sleeping landlords' setting up quasi-labour hostels. But in one sense the data are only suggestive for they do not give a total picture of what is happening on individual plots. After all, there is no reason why a plot should have only one category of worker, nor does the data tell us if, for example, the two employed workers living on a particular plot are both sub-tenants or if one is a sub-tenant and the other a landlord. Table 6.9 is an attempt to further clarify the problem by showing the various combinations of employment categories in relation to the tenancy structure. Here I show the distribution of different combinations of employment categories in terms of two aspects of tenancy - the existence or non-existence on individual plots of landlords and sub-tenants.

TABLE 6.9  
EMPLOYMENT AND TENANCY ON INDIVIDUAL PLOTS ON MALOTA - 1971

Employment Category	No Sub-tenants	Landlords Sub-tenants (%)	No-landlord <sup>1</sup> Sub-tenants	All Plots
Only employed	37.3	27.1	33.3	36.3
Only Self-employed	40.0	6.1	6.7	18.5
Only unemployed	6.0	3.3	1.9	4.6
Employed and self-employed	5.3	31.5	16.2	18.1
Self-employed and unemployed	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.1
Employed and unemployed	4.0	19.9	16.2	13.4
Employed, self-employed, and unemployed	0.7	8.8	4.8	4.9
	<u>96.62</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>98.92</u>

Source: Derived from household returns of Municipal Survey.

<sup>1</sup> The category of 'no-landlord' includes plots with tenants. I have not included the category 'no landlord/no sub-tenant' because the sample was so small (18) as to make the percentages virtually meaningless. In fact six of these plots were 'employed only', six were 'self-employed only', four were 'unemployed only', and two had both employed and unemployed people.

<sup>2</sup> The shortage in these two totals is due to incomplete data for five plots.



As far as plots that only have employed people on them are concerned, there is a fairly even distribution between the three tenancy categories. Plots with both landlords and sub-tenants tend to be under-represented which points, though nothing more, to the possibility that landlords who are employed are less likely to take on sub-tenants.<sup>1</sup> There is a high percentage of plots with no sub-tenants which only have employed people, but this in no way contradicts the idea that landlords are prone to becoming self-employed. As we can see from the Table, an even larger proportion of these plots have only self-employed workers on them.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, taking the data from a different angle, we find that 71% of all plots with only self-employed workers have a landlord but no sub-tenants. Of course, a plot with no sub-tenants is much more likely to have only one individual that can be categorised, and this no doubt explains the low representation in the various combinations of categories. With the plots that have a landlord but no sub-tenants, the main conclusion we can therefore make is that the landlord is as likely to be self-employed as employed.

It is slightly more difficult to interpret the data relating to plots with sub-tenants, for we are still

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<sup>1</sup> The assumption here is that if there is only one category represented on a plot, then the landlord is a member of that category. Thus if a plot has 'only employed', then the landlord is employed.

<sup>2</sup> There has not of course been any suggestion that self-employment is universal amongst landlords. Reynolds, for example, had 40% of his plot-holders in wage-earning occupations.

not in a position to distinguish directly between the landlords and the sub-tenants. However, there are a number of clear deductions to be made. The majority of plots with both a landlord and sub-tenants (87.3%) have at least one employed person on them, compared with a figure of only 47.3% for those plots without sub-tenants. Nearly one-third of such plots have a combination of self-employed and employed workers. The three categories - only employed, self-employed/employed, and unemployed/employed completely dominate this tenancy group. Though this data still hides the individuality of single plots and their unique nature, there can be no doubting the trend that is apparent for landlords, whatever their employment status, to take on employed sub-tenants. Though it is theoretically possible for all the 20% of plots with employed and unemployed workers to have employed landlords and unemployed sub-tenants, in view of what has already been said, and the case studies of the next chapter, the likelihood is very remote.<sup>1</sup>

Plots that have no landlord, but some sub-tenants, i.e. those run by tenants or sleeping landlords, follow the general trend brought about by sub-tenancy. However, there is an even greater predominance in the 'only employed' category. Indeed, these plots account for almost one-third of all plots with only employed people on them.

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<sup>1</sup> This is supported by the fact that 70% of plots with employed and self-employed, and 59% of plots with employed and unemployed workers, have both a landlord and sub-tenant(s).

This strongly supports the idea that sleeping landlords, having left their plots, are most likely to rent them out to workers who are employed in the town.

This data therefore points strongly to a number of basic ideas that have already been presented. Firstly, that plot-holders are much more likely to be self-employed than the general urban population; that many plot-holders take on sub-tenants, who are frequently employed; and that there is a close relationship between sub-tenancy and self- and unemployment. Secondly, there is the wider conclusion, linking up with the other data presented earlier in this chapter, that although the survey data points towards the emergence of wage-employment as the dominant category on the compound compared with twenty years ago, the situation cannot properly be understood without reference to all aspects of employment status, and the inter-relationships between the different categories. Similarly, it cannot be understood without reference to the system of tenancy on the compound, and the changes in employment structure since 1952 can be seen in terms of changes in housing policy.

### 6:7 Conclusion

What I have tried to do in this chapter is to show that certain aspects of Malota's social composition have changed over the last twenty years, and that independence was a major factor in bringing about these



changes. I have tried to do this by reference to the ways in which individuals choose, or are forced to choose, between a number of alternatives. As people move between town and country, between towns, or from one job to another, they are constrained by certain factors. These are basically linked to the point that an individual has reached in his life, migratory and job career. I have looked at how particular factors such as age, skill, employment status, and sex can act as constraints, and have tried to show how the general properties of Malota compound are related to these constraints and consequently lead to a particular social composition. But Malota and its inhabitants can only be seen in terms of the overall housing framework, and in particular the supply of, and demand for, housing, together with the types of alternatives that are available. Though Malota is a slum compound, declared by the authorities to be a disaster area, it is an attractive option to some individuals, and the only option to others. But the decision to live on Malota is not, as many assume, a negative thing. It is a decision frequently derived from the weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of living there, as opposed to other housing areas in the town, to other towns, or to the individual's rural home. As I have tried to show, it is often the case that the cost of living in such an apparent slum is heavily outweighed by the positive advantages to be gained by remaining there.

This chapter has concentrated on a number of demographic abstractions in order to give the overall

picture at any point in time, and also to allow comparisons over a period of time. In order to give these abstractions some substance, the next chapter will concentrate on a limited number of plots surveyed during 1971.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE COMPOSITION OF INDIVIDUAL PLOTS - SOME CASE STUDIES

#### 7:1 Introduction

What is now apparent, and not of course unexpected, is that Malota does not have an average or standard plot, either in physical or social terms. The nature of an individual's tenancy on a plot provides a framework around which other social relationships and compositional patterns within this context will develop. There are a number of possible variations of this basic framework that we must look at. It was not the intention of this study to look at all the plots on Malota, or even to investigate all the different patterns (were such a thing possible). A large number of plots were visited, sometimes intentionally but frequently as the result of a casual meeting or invitation. In all cases I tried to collect some basic information on the people living on the plot, but the breadth and depth of such information was inevitably varied. The case studies in this chapter are plots that I visited several times, and where I am certain that the data is substantially correct.<sup>1</sup> It is

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<sup>1</sup> The data has been checked against information provided by the 1971 Council Survey household returns and where there was any substantial discrepancy the examples were discarded.



in no way meant to be a statistically random sample, nor does the data allow for any sort of typology. What I have tried to do is to draw out, in an illustrative manner, the processes by which different compositional patterns emerge from the general framework of tenancy that exists on Malota.

## 7:2 Plots with No Sub-Tenants

Most of this particular group of plot-holders were self-employed men, only one of them working for a firm in the town. A study of the life histories of some of the individuals reflects only too well various themes drawn out in the last chapter showing how, even without the gains to be made from sub-tenancy, Malota can be a very attractive option.

Plot A1: The landlord of this plot, Christopher, is a man of the Kwandi tribe<sup>1</sup> who is aged about 50. He is a bricklayer and works for a local building firm. He had learnt his trade on the Copperbelt where he appeared to have no difficulty in working constantly. In 1948 he married and two years later moved to Livingstone where a number of his wife's relatives, including her parents, lived. He also had a brother and a sister living in the town. A job was arranged for him, by his father-in-law, with a small firm. Apparently, a house on the Municipal Council was promised him by the firm, but this was not

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<sup>1</sup> The Kwandi are one of the Bilateral group of tribes associated with the Lozi. See McCulloch (1956:32)

TABLE 7.1

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS OF 20 PLOTS ON MALOTA - 1971

Plot Number	Total Population	Sub-Tenants	Children	Dependants	Employed	Self-Employed	Not Employed
A1	7	0	5	1	0	1	0
A2	4	0	0	1	2	1	0
A3	20	3	13	3	2	1	1
A4	8	0	6	1	0	1	0
B1	6	1	2	2	1	1	0
B2	15	4	7	3	4	1	0
B3	20	3	12	4	2	2	2
B4	15	3	8	4	3	1	0
C1	10	2	4	3	3	0	0
C2	3	1	0	1	1	1	0
C3	6	2	2	1	2	0	0
C4	8	0	3	4	0	1	0
D1	16	1	8	5	1	1	0
D2	3	1	0	1	0	2	0
D3	12	0	9	2	0	1	0
D4	13	3	8	1	3	1	0
E1	11	3	4	3	2	2	0
E2	12	3	6	2	2	1	1
E3	3	0	0	0	3	0	0
E4	14	3	10	2	3	1	0

Note: The plot numbers are fictitious.

forthcoming and his father-in-law obtained a vacant plot for him on Malota's A section. This was in a poor condition, but Christopher was unwilling to build any more property because he hoped to get a house on one of the other compounds. As this became an increasingly unlikely event, he accepted that he would have to do something and was about to build a new house on the plot when his father-in-law decided to return to his village, leaving his own plot (which was also on A section) to his daughter and son-in-law. Because it was in a much superior condition, they moved onto this, and have remained there since 1955.

Just after arriving in Livingstone, Christopher had joined the Church of the New Apostle which has its meeting place just off Malota. By 1970 he had become a top official, or elder, of the church and a lay preacher. A great deal of his time was taken up by church-related activities. This particular church originates in Frankfurt and, though the congregation is totally African, there are very obvious European influences in the way the church is administered and the services carried out. This European approach extends throughout the whole of Christopher's life-style. This is particularly evident in his plot which has a single, bungalow-type building, in excellent condition, with glass in (and curtains at) the windows, a rocking chair, a china set in a sideboard, bookshelves, and even plotted plants at the front porch. The effect is very distinctive and the plot is well known throughout the compound. This obviously pleases Christopher who feels that it reflects the high status



he has achieved through his church.

He has never had any sub-tenants living on the plot and is adamant that he will never do so. The only other people at present living there are his wife and five children. As a bricklayer, he earns about K60 a month which he feels is perfectly adequate to enable him to maintain his position in society.

We can see in this case-study a number of factors at work in bringing this man to Malota and keeping him there. Firstly, the influence of kinship and marriage appears to have been an important constraint on the options open to this particular individual. Getting married forced a previously highly mobile, young man to make decisions in terms of long-term criteria. But his original choice was to aim for housing on the Municipal Compound. It was the second factor, lack of available housing, that frustrated this and basically left only one other option - moving to Malota. This in no way appealed to Christopher, but the alternative cost of moving away was too great in that it involved breaking off links with his wife's family (and maybe even his wife). So he decided to take what was available. Having moved on to Malota, he has made investments in terms of time and money and has developed a network of relationships, centred on the church, that are of very great, in his view irreplaceable, value. These links with the church virtually guarantee that he has no desire to leave Livingstone. The possession of a plot (and the low rent) provide him with long-term security that will not be so badly affected

should he become unemployed, and will enable him to remain with the church. He is also in an excellent position to use his skill, bricklaying, for self-employment should he become redundant. As a result, his original reluctance to live on Malota has now been replaced by a positive wish to remain there and he has recently refused the offer of a house on the Libuyu municipal compound, because of the long-term implications.

The fact that Christopher has remained, and intends to remain, on Malota is not therefore simply a question of individual characteristics such as having a skill, though this is undoubtedly one factor. It is the way in which the different factors are interconnected over a period of time in such a way as to constrain the individual to make investments of sufficient value that there are, in his perception, no preferable alternatives.

Plot A2: Christopher is unusual in that work, or rather employment, has not been a significant problem and is unlikely to become one, even if he is made redundant. The landlord of plot A2 is in a different situation. He was born in the Western Province in 1910 and left his home for the Copperbelt when he was 19 years old. There he worked in a variety of unskilled jobs before moving to Lusaka, according to a friend of his because of trouble with a woman. Having little success in the capital, he moved down along the line-of-rail working for short periods in the various small towns and, for two years, as

a building labourer in Mazabuka. During his, apparently frequent, periods of unemployment, he made a living as a petty trader of various sorts. As he got older, he seems to have found these periods as a petty trader becoming more common. He had married a woman of his own tribe, Chokwe, in 1947, just before he left Lusaka and in the subsequent years he appears to have been placed under a good deal of pressure to move to Livingstone<sup>®</sup> which he eventually did, in 1954. When he arrived, he stayed with a younger brother who lived a few miles outside of the town. He claims that he went to Livingstone confident that he could obtain employment, but by that time he was 44 years old and his only previous employment had been unskilled. With so many younger, fitter men around, his opportunities were extremely limited. His brother at least realised this and advised him to go to Malota to look for a plot from which he could run some sort of business. He was very fortunate, and within days had found an old man who was contemplating returning to his village. The plot on A section that he wished to leave had very little on it, and the one dilapidated building that there was had fallen down during the previous rains. As a result, the plot cost virtually nothing, though he had to borrow money from his brother to have some accommodation built. At this stage he had virtually no money and, for a while, helped a number of other traders around the compound. Eventually, he got together enough money to build a small hut, and to set himself up in business. He now sells fish and cooking oil both on Malota and in villages



around the town. Though he is still nothing more than a petty businessman, he has prospered enough to build himself two, fairly substantial, good quality buildings on his plot. One of these he occupies with his wife, the other is occupied by two sons (aged 18 and 20) who work for an engineering firm in town.

He now feels that he is too old to move on elsewhere. He has not returned home, except for two brief visits, since 1929, all his other brothers having moved on to other urban centres in Zambia. He feels that, "If I go home I may die, so I don't like to go there, or to take my family." He believed that, because he had his own plot and was financially independent, Malota was now his 'home'.

In this study, it is once again possible to trace a series of experiences that make the particular individual's arrival on Malota seem almost inevitable. His inability to acquire a particular skill, and his high degree of mobility, provided little investment in job terms and also guaranteed that his employment prospects would become increasingly restricted as he got older. Undoubtedly, the fact that he was not married until he was 40 contributed to his high rate of mobility. His actions seem to have been based on short-term criteria until he did get married. His investment in returning to his village is limited and the urban situation is a more attractive proposition providing the costs do not become too great. The possibility of this happening has been reduced by the movement to Malota and his investment in, and commitment to, the compound is so great that the chance

of his movement away is virtually non-existent.

Plots A4 and D3: Both these plot-holders were self-employed craftsmen, the former a bricklayer and the latter a tailor. Both of them claimed to be earning in the region of K50-60 a month which made them, in Malotan terms, relatively successful. They both lived in relatively good quality housing which the bricklayer had built himself, and which the tailor had had constructed at a cost of over K200. Both had a large number of children in the 1-17 age category (leaving, in simple spatial terms, little room for sub-tenants) and both had lived in the compound for more than 15 years. In each case, they had arrived in Livingstone early in their migratory careers - before they were 21 - and both had learnt their skills whilst they were in town.

In both cases, they had reached the age, 40-plus, when occupational security normally becomes more difficult to obtain. But both of them felt that, for a number of reasons, it was imperative that they remain in Livingstone. We have seen already how time itself is an important investment and between them the two men had spent over 40 years in Livingstone. They had acquired property, in one case built it himself. Of crucial importance to both of them was the need to have their children brought up and educated in an urban environment. This in itself meant that they would want to spend at least another ten years in town. Because of this, they were heavily committed to remaining in Livingstone. In addition, they had a good

deal invested in Malota specifically. Being self-employed, they depended to a great extent on custom from within Malota, or from the surrounding Maramba compound. The bricklayer especially had developed a good trade, particularly since independence, and Malota was ideal for the pursuit of his trade. For both of them, movement away from Malota would have been an unattractive and costly proposition which would almost certainly lead to a breakdown in the network of informal links on which their incomes were based.

These two men had invested heavily in Malota over the years, and their commitment to the compound was high, for it allowed them to maintain their position despite the fact that they were close to an age when many men are forced to decide to leave town. For the time being, their skills ensured that they had no need to take on sub-tenants. The limited financial gains that this would bring (of less value because of their already high income) was outweighed by the overcrowding and inconvenience that would result. Equally, however, they were aware that the day might come when they would have to take on sub-tenants. This was, of course, just one more factor encouraging them to remain on the compound, for on any other compound it would not have been feasible.

However, both these men, like many others, had to face the threat of the compound's demolition and the destruction of their businesses. The landlord of A4 had, about eight years previously, seriously considered leaving. But they now felt that the threats had been around for so



many years that they were no longer realistic; certainly not enough to outweigh the gains acquired from remaining on the compound.

Plot C4: The four previous cases are of men who have done sufficiently well in their particular line of business that they have no need, at this point in time, to take on sub-tenants. It is an option that they leave open for the future. The same cannot be said of the fifth case. The plot-holder on C4 was a self-employed man who made small flower vases from animal horns that he bought from the local slaughter house. These he then sold to tourists at the Victoria Falls. He was able to make four of these each day and, selling them at 65 ngwee each, he was theoretically capable of earning between K40 and K50 a month. However, a highly fluctuating market, and a similar workrate, meant that he rarely made even half this sum. The three buildings on his plot were in a much dilapidated condition. He needed three buildings in order to accommodate his wife and three children, his younger brother, and his mother and her sister. The mother and her sister were very old and totally dependent upon the landlord, and the younger brother helped him to sell the vases. His dependants were a drain on his, already limited, cash resources, but the need to accommodate them also prevented him from obtaining further cash by sub-letting, though he would have liked to do this. In any case, he did not have the capital to build better quality housing which people would be willing to rent.

His financial position was, therefore, highly insecure and showed no signs of improving. Malota was the only option for him in Livingstone, for it did at least provide some sort of housing for his dependants, and a base for his business. He felt that when his elder relatives died and his children left school, he would have no hesitation in returning to his village. Urban life to him was a day-to-day struggle, and its only advantage was that it enabled him to fulfill certain obligations to his kin. Malota was, in effect, the last possible option within the urban context. The major constraints on this particular individual were his kinship obligations. Contradictorily, these obligations made it necessary for him to remain in town, at the same time making town a less attractive option by reducing his income and preventing him from taking up the option of sub-letting.

Sub-tenants are a possible, and not an automatic, option for plot-holders on Malota. Having sub-tenants can cause a good deal of inconvenience and overcrowding which can easily outweigh the advantages of the income that is brought in. Sub-tenants, and particularly the younger ones, can also be a social problem, and many landlords complained of the behaviour and manners of the people living with them. To many people, renting out rooms is a far from ideal situation and one that they would prefer to avoid until there is absolutely no alternative.

### 7:3 Plots with Three or More Sub-Tenants

Once a landlord has, however, decided to take on sub-tenants, it is a question of calculating how many people he would like to take and how many people he has space for. It is at this point that the potential for exploitation, so prevalent amongst sleeping landlords according to the Council report, becomes evident. Some plots are able to accommodate up to thirty people, which leaves great scope for making money. But the evidence suggests that there is a lot less of this than might be expected. There are for example, only four plots on the whole compound with more than five sub-tenants and all of them have the landlord living on the plot. On the other hand, there is no doubt that plots rented out by sleeping landlords have, on average, more sub-tenants than those where the landlord is present. 39% of sleeping landlord-owned plots had three sub-tenants or more compared with a figure of 26% for ordinary landlords. Similarly, whereas 49% of plots with the landlord present had only one sub-tenant, there was a figure of only 30% for sleeping landlords. However, in these cases we must take into account the spatial factor: if the landlord, and maybe his family, are present, there is bound to be less room for sub-letting. In fact, the average number of people living on plots rented by sleeping landlords is slightly less than the average for the compound as a whole. This is not to say that exploitation through excessive sub-tenancy does not exist. One particular example is of the descendants of a man who was of some importance on Malota,



and who themselves live on other compounds, who let out the three plots that they had inherited to a total of 35 sub-tenants at a rent of K4 a month each. Though there are a few plots where exploitation is very obvious, and where there is great overcrowding to the financial advantage of the sleeping landlord, these are no more common than similar situations where the landlord is present. But to the majority of plot-holders, sub-tenancy is not a business in itself and is only one aspect of their plot, only one source of income. The following examples are intended to show the variety of frameworks within which sub-tenancy is fitted, even when there are a significant number of sub-tenants on a plot.

Plots A3 and B4: Both these plots had a landlord present, and both were being run, illicitly, as beer places. The wives of the landlords produced two brews, known as 'Kachipembwe' and 'Skokiaan', which could be taken away or consumed on the premises. Both men claimed that they did not make too much profit from their businesses; as one of them put it, "Sometimes we win, sometimes we lose". Because it is illegal to brew one's own beer, and particularly to sell what you brew, it is a hazardous and insecure occupation. Though the police are not over-zealous, there are occasional checks on the compound, with certain confiscation and possible fines for those who are caught. It was apparent that an individual on Malota could not live by brewing alone, and both men rented out

huts to sub-tenants.<sup>1</sup> This brought in, in one case, K12 a month and in the other K15. Both plots had three sub-tenants and a large number of children, and as a result were very overcrowded. On A3, for example, I estimated there to be, at one point, a total of twenty people living there. Each of the sub-tenants on this plot had his family living with him, though in one case the sub-tenant became unemployed and decided to send his wife and children back to the village whilst he tried to set up in business as a carver in the 'airport art' business. The landlord himself was over sixty years old and had spent a good deal of time on the Copperbelt before coming to 'see' his sister in Livingstone in the late 1950s. Through contacts of his brother-in-law he had obtained a plot on Malota for £65 and since then he had tried his hand at a number of things, none of them very successfully. Having sub-tenants provided a minimal form of security, catering for his basic needs. He had, by the nature of his business, developed an extensive network of contacts throughout Malota and Maramba, and this he valued highly. He saw his sister and brother-in-law virtually every day, and he was willing to put up with the chaotic and overcrowded surroundings in order to continue his present lifestyle. When asked about returning home now that he was getting old, he would reply: "What more would I find in

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<sup>1</sup> It was my assistant's less generous interpretation that the individuals concerned were simply lazy, and that having obtained a basic income from sub-letting, decided to pursue a hobby which would pay for itself.

my village?"

Plot B4 was very similar in terms of overcrowding, but the landlord was nearly twenty years younger and had both his wife and a fifteen year old son living with him. In fact, he was under a good deal of pressure from his wife to move to a more secure, and legal, business in order that they might get rid of, at least some of, the sub-tenants. She did not like living on Malota and had put their names down for municipal housing. In an attempt to force him to do something about the matter, she had twice left him, and had returned only when he had promised to try and change. He, on the other hand, had no objection whatsoever to living on the compound and particularly enjoyed running the beer place. His career pattern was very similar to that of the previous landlord, for he had worked as an unskilled labourer on the Copper-belt and along the line-of-rail before coming to Livingstone to work on a large building contract. He argued that his present situation, though not ideal, was undoubtedly better than he could do elsewhere and was at least secure for there would always be a demand for alcohol and accommodation. He was not convinced that providing goods for the tourist market, which was his wife's idea, would provide any security, particularly as he had no specific skill.

In both these cases, we have individuals whose options are severely restricted. The dependence on brewing and sub-tenancy suggests a point has been reached in their urban career where the only other real alternative



is to retire to their rural homes. In neither case do they find this an attractive proposition. They would prefer to remain in town, even at the cost of living in an overcrowded environment and being involved in an illegal and insecure occupation. Sub-tenancy provides a background of security, however minimal, against which they can operate their business.

Plots B2, D4 and E4: In these three cases, the plot-holder was a woman, though the situations were very different. B2 was rented by an old woman who had an elder brother living with her; the holder of E4 was a young woman of 22 who was separated from her husband; and the holder of D4 was a young widow. All three plots had a relatively high population.

B2 was taken over by the present landlady when another of her brothers returned to the village in 1960. The brother, who still lived with her, and who was both old and disabled, made small masks for the tourist market. Because of his age, however, he was unable to make more than a few kwacha, which his sister allowed him to keep. She sold vegetables on a casual basis in and around Malota, but their basic income came from the rents paid by the four sub-tenants who lived in three huts. Two of these sub-tenants had their wives and children with them, the other two were single men who shared a hut. This was another plot that was in an appalling condition. The houses were of poor quality, being little more than mud huts, and the overcrowding was very apparent. Without the

income from the sub-tenants, however, the couple would have had to leave Malota and Livingstone. It was sometimes difficult to understand why in fact they did remain, particularly as the old man insisted that "God willing, I will return to Mongu." They had retained their links with their rural village where some of their family still farmed and it would therefore have been a logical step. The most likely explanation lies in the fact that the sister was a very active member of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect, which has a 'church' on the compound, and has had so for many years. The commitment that this involved, particularly in view of the controversial role played by the sect in Zambia, might make her very reluctant to give it up by leaving the town. Malota was, unquestionably, the only way she could stay in Livingstone, for her age and her sex made her employment opportunities nil, and the only other potential source of economic support - her brother - was unable to help. Even on Malota, she could not have survived without sub-letting.

Though the young girl on E4 claimed to be the 'landlord', her neighbours insisted that the plot belonged to an old woman who had 'temporarily' returned to her village, making the girl, in effect, the tenant. Before the girl had separated from her husband she had lived on Libuyu compound but when he left she had no alternative - other than returning home - than to move on to Malota. She claimed that she had moved onto this particular plot because the previous owner was 'a relative' but was reluctant to clarify this or to say whether any money had

been involved. She had subsequently formed a relationship with a man from Maramba's A section, but she claimed that he gave her no money and that he 'was just a visitor'. At the time of this study, there were three sub-tenants living there. They were all members of the same family, a man, his wife, three young children, and two older sons who were aged 19 and 22. All three men worked as labourers for Burtons, a large construction firm, but preferred not to live on the squatter compound set up by Burtons workers to the North of Malota, because "it is too rough". All three men paid money to the girl but they only occupied two huts and the total rent was K10 a month. For a while, the two sons moved on to Burton's compound which meant that the girl's only apparent income was K5 a month. During this period, antagonism sprang up between the girl and some of the neighbours who accused her of prostitution. They insisted that, even with sub-tenants, she could not possibly make a living without resort to prostitution.<sup>1</sup>

The third plot in this group, D4, was occupied by a widow who ran a small business, selling firewood and cooking oil. She herself had no children, but one of her sub-tenants was her brother who had lived on the plot, with his wife and eight children, since 1966. He worked as a driver for a firm in the town and paid K10 a month for two Kimberley brick houses. A fourth house was

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the role of prostitution in urban areas, see Little (1973: 76-101)



occupied by a young man who worked as a clerk for the municipal council. The woman had inherited the plot and the buildings from her husband who had been an engineering foreman, and it seemed obvious that, without such an inheritance, she would have had to leave town altogether unless she had remarried.

These three cases involved women in dissimilar situations, but there are certain general points that can be made. Malota remains the one place where a woman might live securely. Should she find herself alone, she is not automatically faced with the normal options of marriage, living with relatives, or returning home. In each of the situations discussed here, the woman has lost an important asset in terms of Zambian urban life - their husbands. Remarriage was not an option for the old woman, and increasingly unlikely for the younger widow, who was about 35 years old. The young girl was not divorced, only separated and marriage was therefore not, for the time being, a possible alternative. The oldest and youngest women had very definite reasons for not wishing to leave Livingstone; the youngest one because she wished to carry on a life-style that could not be obtained in rural areas; the oldest one because of her deep involvement with a religious organisation. Though she was the effective landlord, the childless widow lived with her brother and was, through payment of rent, supported by him. Returning home would provide no extra advantage, and at the same time would involve the cost of breaking links on Malota that had been developed over the previous decade.

Were it not for Malota and its peculiar tenancy system, all three women would probably have to decide between remarriage and a return home. Malota allowed them to remain in town, as they wished. The urban situations makes certain constraints on women, as we have already seen, in terms of options available to them. Independence from a husband or other kin is hard to obtain, and if it is involuntarily achieved, either through death or divorce, it is difficult for a woman to remain in town. Malota is a unique situation in which a woman can remain independent from the marital state and in town.

Plots E1, E2 and E3: In the cases I have already talked about, sub-tenancy has been a valuable additional source of income the regularity of which was of crucial significance to the plot-holders. But in a number of cases on the compound, sub-tenancy involved a much more flexible idea with a good deal less emphasis on the financial aspects.

Plot E1, for example, had four adult men living on it. The landlord ran a successful retail business selling clothes on a door-to-door basis. In recent years, he had spent an increasing amount of time away from Malota and from Livingstone, to the extent that he was classified as a 'sleeping' landlord by the 1971 Council survey. The other three men were related to him, two of them being younger brothers, and the third a younger brother of his father. One of the brothers works as a

tailor for a small firm in the town, but had spent a good deal of time out of work. The uncle worked, at that time, as a dustman for the municipality. The third brother claimed to be 'self-employed' but at no time during this study did he bring in anything like a constant income, though he did occasionally earn a few kwacha as a result of doing odd jobs for other businessmen on the compound. The two employed men had their wives living with them; the wives of the other two had returned - temporarily it was claimed - to their home in the Western Province. It is difficult to regard these three men as sub-tenants in the formal sense. They claimed to pay rent to the 'landlord', but the payments appear to have been sporadic and, in the case of the brother who was effectively unemployed, non-existent. The landlord had become a relatively successful businessman and could afford, and was expected, to show generosity to his relatives, particularly if they were going through a difficult phase. In fact, the brother who was unemployed eventually left the plot and returned to his village. This had been inevitable for nearly two years, and it was only because of his brother that he had been able to remain in Livingstone that long. Thus, though the Council, and even the participants themselves, talked of sub-tenancy on this plot there was no question of a regular and essential income, and certainly not of exploitation.

Plot E2 was also occupied by four men. The landlord made drums for the tourist trade which were then sold at the Victoria Falls by one of the other men. The other



two occupants were employed at that time as labourers on a building site just outside the town. These two men paid K2 a month whilst they were working, but in between jobs they were allowed to stay without payment. The man who assisted the landlord received rent-free accommodation and part of the profits in lieu of wages. All four men were Lozi, and all came from Sesheke. The landlord had been one of the first men to move onto E section, and the other three had joined him at various points over the years. They regarded each other as friends and 'brothers', and spent a good deal of time in each others' company.

Plot E3 also had three official sub-tenants according to the Council survey. The plot was actually occupied by three bachelors who had lived there since 1945 and who were all skilled mechanics. The plot was officially in the name of one of them, but they apparently ran some sort of communal system, with all costs being shared by the three men.

On all three of these plots, relationships have developed that subordinate the usual economic landlord/sub-tenant relationship. In one case, kinship is the most obvious source of this subordination. In the other two cases it is interesting to note that on each plot the adult males are all of the same tribe - Lozi on E2 and Bemba on E3. In each case, financial advantage for the landlord was not the dominant factor, though not completely ignored. The landlords regarded other factors as being more crucial. The landlord of E1, having become successful, was obliged to help his kin when they found them-

selves in difficulties. Allowing them to stay on his plot, where he himself rarely was to be found, discharged these obligations in kind, rather than in cash, with minimal cost to himself. The landlord of E2 had developed close relationships with the other occupants and, though he demanded some sort of payment normally, in situations where such payment was difficult - for example, when the labourers became unemployed - he was willing to forgo these demands in order that he might retain the links of friendship. In simple terms, such links were seen as being worth more than K4 a month. On E3 the important factor was that the plot provided cheap and permanent accommodation to three men of similar age, marital status, occupational status, and tribal origin.

The sorts of situations described on these three plots were relatively uncommon, but they serve to illustrate the great variety of tenancy situations that exist on the compound. They also show that other factors than straight financial reward can be involved in the relationship between a landlord and those people (other than his immediate family) that are living on the compound. If we define sub-tenancy purely as an economic relationship, some of the people involved could not be classified as such. It must therefore be remembered that in the urban situation concepts such as 'reward' and 'payment' can involve things other than cash.

Plot B3: The last plot in the sample that had three or more sub-tenants was unique in that it involved

a 'tenant'. The official landlord had, for many years, run a food business from the plot, selling a variety of cheap basic foodstuffs. About 1961 he had closed down the business on Malota and opened a new one in Mambova. He had left one of his old employees there, as a tenant, in order that the old man might have somewhere to live. This old man, who claimed to be over 75 years old, now sub-lets the plot to three families and was allowed to keep the income that accrued. This plot was decidedly overcrowded with about twenty people living there. Though there were only three sub-tenants paying rent, there were at least three other adult males, relatives of the sub-tenants, living there. As the total rent paid to the tenant was only K12 a month, it can be hardly called exploitation, particularly considering the overcrowded and inconvenient conditions under which the tenant was himself forced to live. But to the old man it was a very crucial K12, the difference between remaining in town or not. Like so many of the other cases I have looked at, the landlord did not approach the question of sub-tenancy from the point of view of maximising the financial rewards. Instead, the number and type of sub-tenants to be taken on were decided in terms of the minimum amount that was needed in order to allow the landlord to achieve whatever goal he was seeking. Thus the criterion was "How many sub-tenants do I need in order to satisfy my needs?"; rather than "I have three rooms. What is the maximum number of people paying K4 a month that I can get into them?" The approach was pragmatic rather than exploitative.



#### 7:4 Plots with One or Two Sub-Tenants

The remainder of the plots in this sample have either one or two sub-tenants living there. Such plots are in the majority on the compound, and as a result it is very difficult to trace any distinct set of patterns. The amount of money to be earned from one or two sub-tenants is of course limited and can only be a supplement to the landlord's basic income. It may be for this reason that there appears to be more sub-tenants who are related to the landlord in this particular group.

Plot C1: The owner of this plot is a security guard with a firm of engineers. As such his salary is only K24 a month and the two sub-tenants living there bring this up to K32. Without this supplement, he claims he would have great difficulty in coping because he has three children at school and they are a great expense to him. He first moved to Malota in 1964 after living in Maramba compound with his uncle for three years. The plot, which had only one house in it when he bought it, cost him K30. Both the sub-tenants are also employed and both earn more than him. One is a foreman for a firm called Zambia Tiles and the other is 'senior tailor' at a small, Indian-owned, fashion firm. They both claim to earn K36 a month and pay the landlord K4 of this for a single room each. Both have their wives with them, and the tailor also has a small child. Neither of them like the situation that they live in, the tailor wanting to buy his own plot on Malota and the foreman wishing to move to

one of the municipal compounds. It is interesting to note that, though the sub-tenants earn 50% more than the landlord in terms of wages, by the time the rent has been paid all three men have the same income - K32.

Plot B1: The Chokwe man who rented this plot sold tobacco in the nearby Maramba market. Because he spent a good deal of his time in the Gwembe valley buying tobacco, the plot was normally looked after by his widowed sister who sold fish and vegetables from the plot. There was a second house on the plot that was rented out. This had been built by the landlord, at a cost of K90, for this particular purpose. It was occupied by a labourer for the municipal council and his wife and two children. All the people living on this plot, including the sub-tenant, were members of the Watchtower sect. The landlord had not returned to his village in 32 years and intended to stay the rest of his life on Malota because it allowed him to be independent. He wished to take on another sub-tenant but said that he would only take people who were members of his 'church'.

Plot C3: This plot was held by an extremely old Ngoni man who claimed to have been living in Livingstone before Malota was built. He also claimed to have been the first African bricklayer in the town and to have worked on most of the early major building projects when Livingstone had been the capital. Two of his sons lived with him on the plot, but because he refused direct support from them,

he charged them K5 a month rent. One of the sons was a teacher with a wife and two children, and the other was an employed carpenter who was unmarried. They both claimed that they only lived on the plot because they had to look after their father. This was probably true for the teacher's wife did the cooking for everyone on the plot and generally looked after the old man who was virtually blind and rarely moved from the plot. The carpenter, however, was interested in setting up his own business, and the plot would have been ideal as a base. Though he never directly admitted it, there was little doubt that he hoped eventually to inherit the plot.

Plot C2: This plot was rented from the Council by an old Lozi man who was now living in a home for old people that was run by the Council's Welfare department. The plot was looked after by the landlord's younger brother who had a shoe repairing business based on the plot and who worked, when he could, as a building labourer. He paid nothing for staying on the plot but was not officially registered as the tenant. He and his brother had lived on the compound since 1943. A room on the plot was let out to a young Lozi couple both of whom worked as clerks for the Council. They had only been living on the plot for two months and hoped that they would be leaving for 'proper housing' very soon. The landlord did not like having children on the plot, and he seemed to have a very high turnover of sub-tenants, few of them apparently staying more than a few months. This may have been due to the ban



on children, but was more probably connected to the clandestine political activity that was based on this plot. Many people on the compound steered clear of this plot for fear of coming under suspicion themselves.

Plots D1 and D2: The other two plots in the sample involved kin who were also sub-tenants. In one case, D1, it involved the landlord's sister, brother-in-law, and family and in the other an unmarried brother of the landlord. Both were sub-tenants in the formal sense, regularly paying rent to the landlord, but obviously the relationship was more than purely economic. In both cases, the sub-tenants were better off financially than the landlord with whom they were staying and it was therefore felt appropriate that they should pay. This seemed to be a general rule on Malota. An individual who was earning regularly, but who could not find accommodation, was expected to pay rent. If he had no job, or was earning very little, then he would be allowed to stay free or at a reduced cost. A plot was seen as a resource which could be used to help out kin, if it was needed badly. Otherwise, it was seen as a resource which could aid the landlord himself by providing an income from rent. Kin arriving in Livingstone make great use of Malota, because the plots are so flexible. A landlord is obliged to help those of his kin in difficulties; to provide accommodation while they look for work and housing. In one sense, living on Malota allows the urban dweller to fulfill his obligations to his kin more easily than if he lived on one

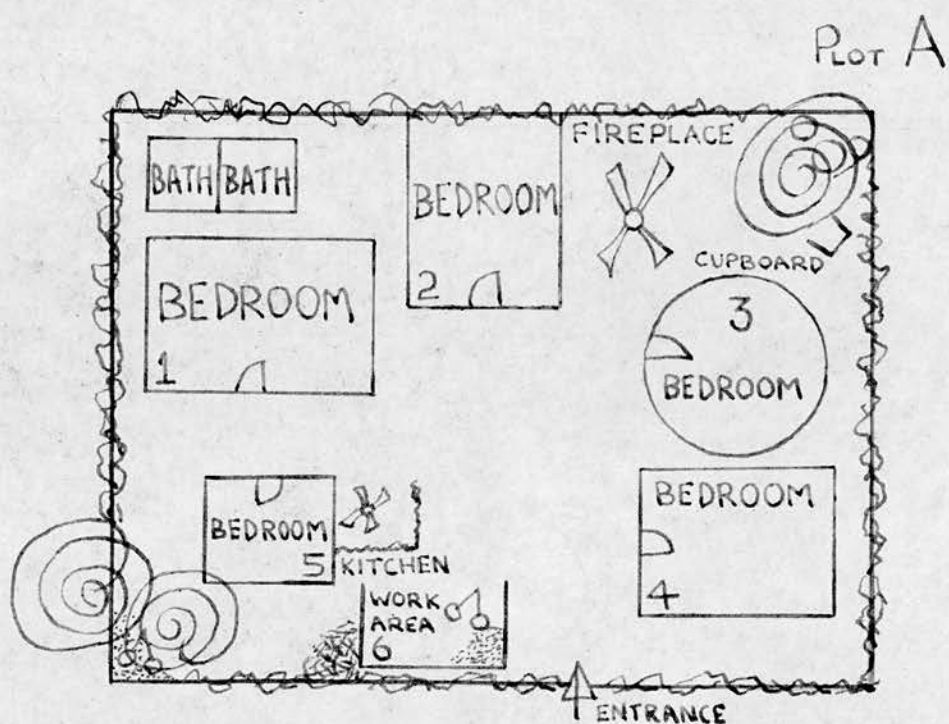
of the other compounds. Equally, of course, it is possible that he has more demands made of him. However, once the new arrival is established financially, and particularly if he has a greater income, then the obligations are reversed in the sense that he is expected to contribute something in the form of rent. Otherwise, the severe shortage of housing would prolong the period of obligation past what would be regarded as reasonable. Many of these kin/sub-tenants remain on the plot for over a year with little prospect of finding alternative housing, yet having obtained work they are reluctant to move on elsewhere. They are therefore quite willing to pay their own way.

#### 7:5 Social Composition and Physical Structure

At this point, having discussed some of the major factors involved, it becomes possible to look at the way in which the social composition of a plot and its physical structure are related. We have already seen how varied both these elements are, but they are not separated or isolated from each other. Physical flexibility leads to a large number of possibilities in terms of social composition; the nature of the social composition of a plot at the same time puts certain demands and constraints on its physical structure. The following four examples show the different ways in which these elements can be interconnected. The wide range of variations possible are shown in Diagram 7.1.

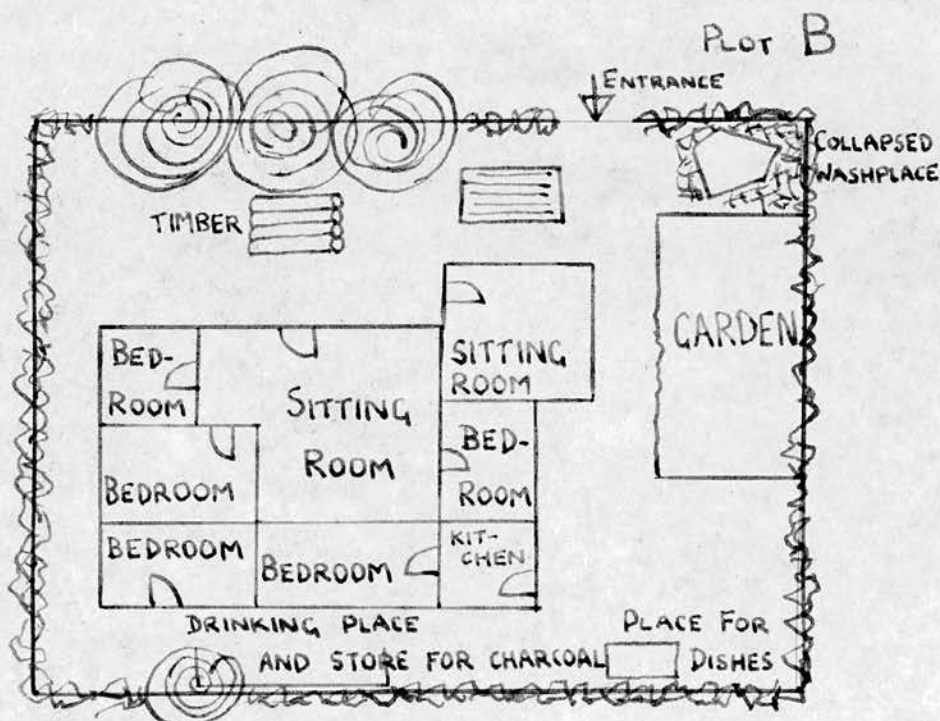
In example A there are five rooms in a rough circle, four of which have thatched roofs. The only

DIAGRAM 7.1: FOUR EXAMPLES OF PLOT LAYOUT



WALLS: Poles and Dagga.

ROOFS: 1,2,3&5 - Grass; 4,6&7 - Iron Sheets.

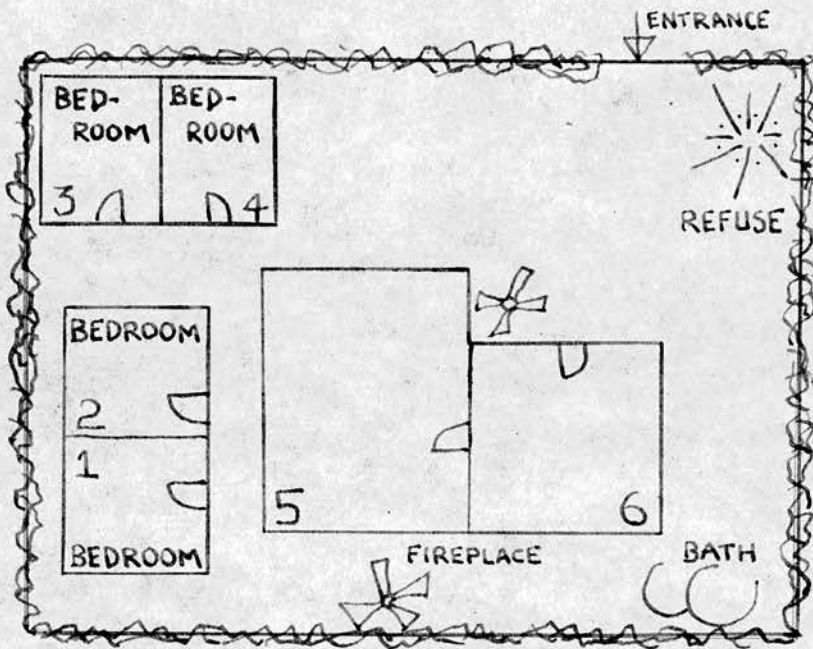


WALLS: Sundried Bricks

ROOFS: Proper Iron Sheets

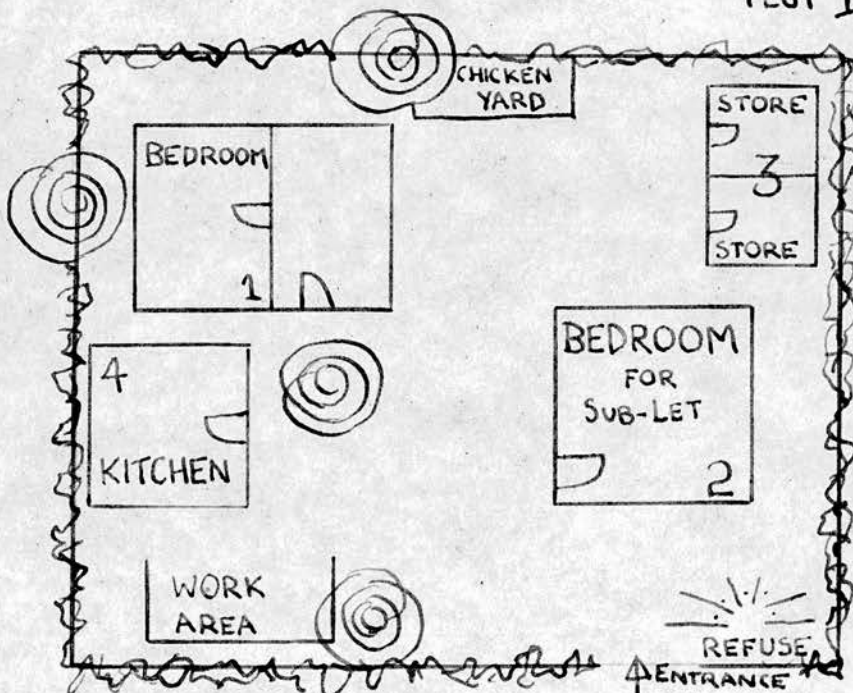


Plot C



WALLS: 1,2,3&4-Concrete Blocks; 5&6 - Poles and Dagga  
 ROOFS: 1,2,3&4-Proper Ironsheets; 5&6 - Asbestos/Ironsheet

Plot D



WALLS: Poles and Dagga  
 ROOFS: Proper Ironsheets

buildings with tin roofs are a work area (one of the inhabitants is a blacksmith) and a new hut (4) that was built recently to accommodate the family of the son of this blacksmith. All of the buildings have walls of poles and dagga. The occupants of the plot are all related to the landlord, though each building is a separate unit and the inhabitants of huts 2, 3 and 4 cook and eat separately. The two oldest men, the blacksmith and his father's youngest brother, live in huts 1 and 5 and have their food cooked for them by two unmarried sisters of the blacksmith who live in hut 2. No one on the plot pays any rent to the landlord, and the blacksmith provides the only source of income. The plot originally consisted of one small hut that was rebuilt. As new people have moved onto the plot, new huts have been built to accommodate them. In this way, the plot has been continually adapted to meet the developing needs of a group of kin, some of whom could not have otherwise remained in town. Physically the plot is typical of the type of plot that gives Malota its rural image.

In dramatic opposition to this is the type of plot shown in example B. In this case, the house is a large, single, brick-walled unit which is centred on what the inhabitants call the 'sitting room'. All the rooms, apart from one bedroom and the kitchen, have glass windows. The house accommodates two brothers and their immediate families, but the food is provided from a central kitchen and the two families normally eat together. Internally, the house resembles a very utili-

tarian version of British suburbia. The two brothers are both carpenters, the eldest one working for a firm in the town, and the younger one producing mainly simple furniture in a workshop on the plot. Together, they had an income that was normally over K100 a month, a considerable income on Malota even with thirteen mouths to feed. Why, with such an income, they stayed on Malota is a complex matter outside the scope of this thesis but it suffices to say in this context that the source of their commitment was primarily political.

Examples A and B both involve plots where the inhabitants are all related, but where factors such as age, income and occupational status have lead to dramatically different consequences. In both cases, the flexibility of plot has allowed people other than the landlord and his nuclear family to move in, though in neither case are formal sub-tenants involved. Examples C and D involve sub-tenants who are also outside of the landlord's family. Example C, in particular, shows very clearly the way in which many plots on Malota have developed. The landlord sells dry fish locally and has developed a successful business. He bought the house, units 5 and 6 in the diagram, at the beginning of 1960 for the cost of £25. This had not been of very good quality and had deteriorated further. He had therefore built two new buildings of a very good quality, though he continued to use the original units. As his children had grown older and some of them left the plot, he found himself with units 3 and 4 vacant and he had therefore taken in a sub-tenant. One of



the two units was left vacant in case of visits from relatives. In this case, the landlord is not primarily concerned with profit, but the land and accommodation are assets and he has no wish to see them wasted.

The landlord of plot D is also self-employed, as a brick maker. He has done this for many years in between working as a labourer for local contractors. In 1971 he had not worked for nearly a year, and as he was approaching 45, he was in the process of accepting that he was likely to be a fulltime brickmaker for the rest of his working life. He therefore obtained a loan from his brother who lives on Libuyu compound and built the extra house which he hoped he would be able to sub-let to two, or maybe three, single men thus providing him with a good stable income as long as he remained in town. When I left Malota, he had in fact only one sub-tenant staying with him but he claimed that this was because he was particular about who he lived with.

The number, size and shape of houses on individual plots on Malota depends on what is needed, and can be altered and adapted as needs change. This is different from most official accommodation in Zambia, which is fixed by the authorities and is not subject to change as the circumstances of the inhabitants alter. The urban situation, and the careers of those living in it, is constantly subject to fluctuations and changes. As towns grow larger and the shortage of housing becomes more critical, the demand for the sort of flexibility that Malota provides inevitably becomes greater. It is in

this sense that Malota is sometimes seen as desirable, and even necessary, both from the point of view of the individuals who are directly concerned, and the authorities who must cope with the housing problem. This is a theme that I shall return to at a later point.

We have seen that individuals live on Malota for a number of reasons and as a consequence of a number of factors. Having obtained a plot on the compound, there are a number of options open to them as to what they will do with it. How many buildings, and of what sort; how many people live there, and who these people are; how much income is derived from the plot and so on. These are all problems over which the plot-holder has a great deal of control. As a result, a plot on Malota is an asset of great potential value, allowing the individual to adapt to the changing demands of life in the urban context. For example, the return of many men to their rural homes as they get older has been an action brought about frequently by economic necessity rather than personal desire or moral obligation. Even now, occupational security is almost a pre-requisite for stability of accommodation. A plot on Malota can be an insurance policy against age, redundancy, market fluctuations, even death. Inevitably, however, there are also costs; the very low standards of the facilities provided and the low status attributed by people in the town to Malotans are particularly important factors. Once again, however, the adaptability of the plot allows some individuals to balance out these costs by building superior quality

structures.

The way in which an individual uses his plot depends, therefore, upon the way in which he assesses these gains and costs. Such assessment is constantly subject to review as his situation, and that of those around him, changes. Events such as the arrival of kin, the leaving home of children, or a drop in income, cause a re-evaluation of the landlord's position. A change in attitudes caused by an increasing fear of the compound's demolition, or the changing demands of a spouse, might cause a similar re-evaluation. The major advantage of Malota is that the individual can more often act on such re-evaluations without giving up those investments that have already been made in terms of time, the development of networks of relationships and so on. Elsewhere, such action is not generally possible or involves giving up the investments.

#### 7:6 Slums, Squatters and Marginality

As we saw earlier, Malota is undoubtedly a slum and is often regarded as a squatter compound. It is not, by any formal definition, the latter, but it is one of the large number of what have become known as 'shanty towns' that surround Africa's large cities. In these last two chapters I have tried to look at the people who live on Malota and the particular factors that have caused them to come and live, and subsequently remain, on the compound. In doing so I have tried to provide an "adequate sociological model of the settlement process ...



based on the actor's changing definition of the 'housing situation' rather than on that of the 'observer'." <sup>1</sup> What I have been able to conclude is that, in both pre- and post-independence situations, Malota has been a positively attractive proposition to specific categories of individuals, even when apparently superior alternatives have been available. It is essential, therefore, that the observer - whether a planner or a sociologist - comprehends the full range of criteria employed by the actors when judging the adequacy of a specific housing situation.

Inhabitants of Malota choose to move there, or remain there, when they perceive the benefits as outweighing the costs of living in a situation regarded by many as totally unacceptable. But what is particularly apparent is that many of the attractive features of Malota exist in the present-day squatter areas and were also present in colonial unauthorised compounds. As a result, there are, in terms of social composition, many comparisons between Malota and these areas.

In particular I identified the opportunities for self-employment (and especially for women and older people) which have always existed there because of the separation of housing from employment and the physical flexibility of Malota's plots. As a result, I found (both in 1951 and 1971) a comparatively high proportion of self-employed workers similar to that which is found in the present day

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<sup>1</sup> Brett (1974:192)

squatter areas.<sup>1</sup> It was also concluded, as has also been noted in Lusaka,<sup>2</sup> that in 1971 there was a tendency for the landlords to be older, self-employed men and their sub-tenants to be younger wage-earners. The illegal activities such as beer-brewing and sub-letting, such an essential aspect of squatter areas, can be carried on in Malota because of the, apparently deliberate, apathy of the municipal authorities.

The housing on Malota, as in unauthorised areas, is cheap, can either be owned or rented, and is not tied to any particular employment situation. This enables a much higher level of residential stability, irrespective of occupational insecurity. Together with the self-employment opportunities, this puts individuals on Malota and elsewhere in a much better position to adapt to the frequently changing needs of themselves and their families than if they lived in authorised low-cost housing areas.

These factors are positive advantages to living in unauthorised and illegal housing areas, as well as Malota. It is very different from the assumption most frequently made that the populations of slums and squatter areas have nowhere else to go. Admittedly, with the present housing situation, many Malotans have no viable alternatives within the context of Livingstone, but the fact remains that they choose to live on Malota rather than move to other towns or return to the rural areas from

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:71)

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:68)

which the majority of them came. As we have seen, the way in which such choices are arrived at depends upon the inter-relationship between a number of factors such as age, job, educational experience and marital status; and the way in which these are perceived by individual actors within the context of their personal network of social relationships. Each individual living on Malota must at least balance the costs and the benefits of living on the compound.

At the same time as we can see the similarities between Malota and unauthorised and squatter areas both in 1951 and 1971, we must also note the very distinct changes that have occurred in the compound over the last twenty years. The change in housing regulations brought about by political independence changed significantly the way in which individuals were able to manipulate the compound's resources. As a result, the compound's social composition changed dramatically, particularly in terms of the occupational structure. But, despite these changes, the contrast between Malota and other authorised urban areas generally remains. This is because, although Malota has changed, so have the towns of Zambia. Malota's distinctiveness in 1951 was brought about by the general structure of colonial employment policy which, through its inflexibility, made the existence of something like Malota virtually inevitable. In the same way, the increasingly acute shortage of official housing, and the inability of the housing authorities to provide alternative solutions, has meant that the population itself has had to take



effective action, normally in the form of squatter areas. Malota is unusual in the sense that though, in its present form, it has developed from the same factors, and is in many ways similar to squatter areas, it has taken place within a situation which does not involve illegal land tenure. Thus Malota has changed since 1951 but has remained, despite its legal status, outside the basic framework of the country's official housing policies.

It is undoubtedly this that gives Malota its 'squatter' reputation, and which is responsible for the general idea that slums and squatter areas are in some way 'marginal' to the urban situation. McEwen summarises the basic idea when she comments:

The term marginality ... tends to combine both **empirical perceptions and theoretical assumptions** that conceive the central problem of shanty-towns as one of **inadequate integration** .... Marginality then is a relational concept which refers, in **different contexts and according to how the concept of integration is operationalized**, to a situation of **tenousness and ambiguity, peripherality, or superfluity and redundancy**.<sup>1</sup>

Malota is seen by many as marginal to Livingstone. It is regarded as highly traditional and almost rural, and is therefore seen as a negation of all that is, or should be, urban. It is the "village within the town". But from the evidence presented, it is my contention that it is its very differences, both physical and demographic, that make it a vital and essential part of the town. Its presence and its nature arise from the inability of successive regimes to cope with the problem of rapid urbanisation,

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<sup>1</sup> McEwen (1974:197)

and reflect the ability of the urban population to develop and adapt outside of the formal structure. There can be no doubt that the people of Malota play as important a role in the life of Livingstone as anyone else. Malota's value lies in the fact that it allows these people to stay in the town. Without it, the inadequacies of the housing authorities over the last twenty years (and before) would have had a much more drastic effect on the health of the town.

## CHAPTER 8

### POLITICS IN URBAN ZAMBIA

#### 8:1 Introduction

We have seen in previous chapters that political changes within what is now Zambia have had a significant influence on the process of urbanization in the country. But what of specific political activities and institutions? How do they relate to the development of urban areas, and to what extent does the housing process, for example, have any significant effect on the nature of political activity? More specifically, in what way do the unusual features of Malota show themselves in the political institutions of the compound? As in other matters, Malota is regarded within Livingstone as being politically isolated and marginal. It is the 'village in the town', attached to, but not part of, Livingstone. As a result, the activities of the people living there are thought to be based on rural rather than urban values and the compound is thought by many to be a bulwark of traditionalism and opposition. Its population is seen as conservative and resistant to the changes that have been brought about by independence. In the following chapters I hope to show how inaccurate this view is, and that what is happening on Malota is



very much a reflection of what is going on in the wider society.

It is inevitable that 1964, the year of independence, provides the focal point for any discussion of political change within Zambia. Taking a broader perspective, however, independence might well be seen as just one point, albeit an important one, in Zambia's movement from a colonial protectorate to the 'one-party participatory democracy' that it is today. We must take care not to overstress the significance of 1964 by providing it with some sort of barrier-like quality that separates off 'what is' from 'what used to be'. Independence was not achieved overnight, nor did its achievement rid Zambia of the effects of colonialism. When Zambia's new leaders took over it was only the first step for, as Pettman points out, "the nation had yet to be created and its interests had yet to be articulated."<sup>1</sup> The political structure inherited was to prove inadequate and a new one would have to be developed. Even now, Zambia is still "in the initial stage of emerging from her colonial past."<sup>2</sup> Independence was a historical process that neither ended nor began on October 24th. 1964; at the beginning of the 1970s many problems remained unsolved and the prospect seemed to be one of growing instability.

The blame for the problems that Zambia has encountered is most frequently attributed to the develop-

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<sup>1</sup> Pettman (1974:34)

<sup>2</sup> Molteno & Tordoff (1974:399)

ment of cleavages within the state. One of the major themes of the nationalist movement was the need for the complete unity of the African population but it has become quite apparent that "conflict on sectional lines has increased sharply in the years since 1964."<sup>1</sup> In particular, it is believed that tribal loyalties and groupings have emerged to form a "major barrier against integration of the people into a nation-wide political unit."<sup>2</sup> This aspect of Zambian political activity was very prominent during the period of my fieldwork. By early 1971, accusations of 'tribalism' amongst political leaders were rampant, and the deep conflicts both within and between political parties were normally attributed to tribal divisions. The fight for independence, with its unified opposition to the colonial regime, subsumed internal differences. But after 1964 what "little unification ... had been achieved in the independence struggle soon dissolved."<sup>3</sup>

### 8:2 Tribalism and Ethnicity

This turn of events in Zambia follows a common trend throughout Africa over the last 25 years as various states have become independent. The fear of the consequences of cleavages within the continent's new, emergent, and supposedly unified states was voiced as early as 1958

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<sup>1</sup> Molteno (1974:62)

<sup>2</sup> Pettman (1974:88)

<sup>3</sup> Pettman (1974:34)

by political leaders who, meeting at the first 'All African Peoples' Congress' in Accra, called tribalism an 'evil practice' and a 'serious obstacle to the unity, political evolution, and rapid liberation of Africa'. At the same time they were only too aware of the possible contradiction that such views involved. Politicians saw the need for large independent political units which would be powerful enough to have some say in their external relations with the rest of the world; yet they were faced with internal cleavages which, though often dividing countries, frequently provided the source of their own power.

The word 'tribalism' in this sense became associated with division and conflict; it became a 'problem'. This provided a basic framework of confusion against which social scientists have tried to understand the role of the tribe in rapidly changing and urbanizing societies. Their difficulties in clarifying what exactly is meant by 'tribalism', or its more recent (and less perjorative) equivalent 'ethnicity', have been compounded by a number of other factors well summarised in the following passage:

Our main argument is that in rural areas membership of a tribe involves participation in a working political system, and sharing domestic life with kinsfolk; and that this continued participation is based on present social and economic needs, and not merely on conservatism. On the other hand, tribalism in towns is a different phenomenon entirely. It is primarily a means of classifying the multitude of Africans of heterogeneous origins who live together in the towns, and this classification is the basis on which a number of new groupings, such as burial and mutual help societies are formed to meet the needs of urban life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gluckman (1970:81)



In this passage Gluckman introduces a number of variables that confuse our understanding of the concept of 'tribalism'. Primarily he is concerned with the urban-rural dichotomy and the tremendous effect that he sees this having on the form and function of the ethnic group. The increasing consideration of the role of tribalism in towns meant that the focus of interest shifted from "the isolated ethnic group defined by its cultural content to the ethnic unit as a social category, a form of structure, embedded within a larger system."<sup>1</sup> Anthropologists working in sometimes extremely isolated rural areas had developed a theoretical framework that emphasised the harmony, equilibrium and integration of the tribe. The analysis of urban life brought them face-to-face with the changes that had taken, and were taking, place, and it quickly became evident that adding theories of acculturation to the tail end of a structural-functional framework was unsatisfactory.<sup>2</sup>

### 8:3 Ethnicity in Towns<sup>3</sup>

The work of the late 1940s and the 1950s, and in

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<sup>1</sup> Bruner (1974:251)

<sup>2</sup> The 'culture contact' school of thought, though primarily concerned with rural areas (Hunter 1961; Mair 1934; Fortes 1945; 1949), provided the initial framework for the study of changing situations with heterogeneous populations (International African Institute 1938). The most notable example of an urban study was Hellman's investigation of a Johannesburg slum yard (1948).

<sup>3</sup> This section can only be brief and selective. A comprehensive statement of the myriad problems, ambiguities and solutions surrounding the subject of urban ethnicity can best be obtained from the book of that title (Cohen 1974)

particular the work of Mitchell and Epstein, was an attempt to develop a new framework. These writers viewed the tribal origins of the population, in the sense of tribal modes of behaviour, as being of secondary importance. The migrant in town was to be seen both as townsman and tribesman depending on the features of the situation under consideration. In this sense, tribalism was not the basis of the organisation of tribal groups but "essentially a category of interaction in casual social intercourse."<sup>1</sup> This argument emphasised the position of the individual migrant in town and the way in which he conceived of, and categorised, ethnic divisions. The urban African came to be seen as living within different 'fields' of activity - work, politics, recreation and so on. In any particular situation the actors were seen to choose certain relevant factors. Epstein, for example, saw 'tribe' as being the most pertinent factor in domestic and interpersonal relationships, but less important in work and political situations.<sup>2</sup> The basic assumption behind this analytic framework seems to be that:

Ethnicity was not a live economic or political issue, but essentially an epistemological device developed by the Africans so that they could comprehend, or make sense of, the bewildering complexity and heterogeneity of urban society. They did this by classifying other townsmen in terms of broad tribal categories.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mitchell (1956:42)

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1958:239-240)

<sup>3</sup> Cohen (1974:xii)

Thus, in towns, the cognitive aspect of tribalism is seen to be dominant. As a result of such work, tribalism came to be seen increasingly in terms of its urban context as an element of urban life subject to manipulation by the individual actors involved. Ethnic divisions were seen as existing, but their significance and their impact on social life were dependent upon the extent to which they were brought into play by the actors in specific situations. This idea has been further developed by Barth who has argued that ethnic categories provide an

organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems. They may be of great relevance to behaviour, but they need not be; they may pervade all social life, or they may be relevant only in limited sectors of activity.<sup>1</sup>

Such arguments have, more recently, come in for a good deal of criticism as being, amongst other things, tautologous and static. Cohen argues that it is not sufficient to reduce ethnicity to the level of strategic manipulation by individuals. This, he claims, is a one-sided argument that does not account "for the potency of the normative symbols which the individual manipulates".<sup>2</sup> Ethnicity, he continues, has to be understood in terms of its relationship to a number of economic and political variables which "for brevity" he subsumes, reluctantly perhaps, under the all-embracing banner of 'political'. He is then able to conclude, with less reluctance, that

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<sup>1</sup> Barth (1969:14)

<sup>2</sup> Cohen (1974:xiii)



the:

specialization of social anthropology is this very political interpretation of what are essentially non-political formations and activities .... The cultures of ethnic groups are universes of such formally non-political formations and activities that are politicized in the course of social action.<sup>1</sup>

Using such a framework, Cohen attempts to cut across the analytic subsystems of urban life used by other researchers which, as Hanna points out, "are not likely to display the same degree of ethnicity".<sup>2</sup> Thus he tries to bring together the separate arenas of urban life by attempting to show how the ongoing competition for available resources, that is the political element of urban life, is carried out (or at least expressed) through the cultural symbols of ethnic divisiveness. In one sense Cohen's views bring us back to the point from which we started, for he is emphasising the strife that exists between different ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup> Thus, though the term 'ethnicity' as used by Cohen does not have the connotations of the term 'tribalism' so frequently used by politicians,<sup>4</sup> it is firmly set within the context of conflict and competition and it is decidedly political. Needless to say, Cohen has his critics. Deshen, for example, seeks to "develop

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen (1974:xvi)

<sup>2</sup> Hanna (1971:136)

<sup>3</sup> Cohen (1969:4)

<sup>4</sup> This is not to say that the term 'ethnicity' has no implications. Indeed, Cohen himself believes that the term will eventually have to be replaced because the word 'ethnic' suggests the idea of minority, inferiority, subordination and so on, when in fact an ethnic group need be none of these things.

an approach to these areas in the field of ethnicity, particularly evident in the urban situation, that the 'political approach' neither encompasses nor adequately conceptualizes".<sup>1</sup> But there is no doubt that much of the recent work on ethnicity in towns is very solidly based on Cohen's framework.

#### 8:4 Ethnicity and Politics in Urban Zambia

It is abundantly clear that, as an analytic concept, the term tribalism (or ethnicity) is far from clear. The continuing search for clarification is much hampered by the way in which the term is also used by non-academics and particularly the media and the politicians. All too frequently (and freely) it is associated with corruption and conservatism,<sup>2</sup> and regarded as a social and political problem rather than a sociological phenomenon. This usage (or misuse) of the term is, of course, part of the very phenomenon that we are trying to study and provides the basis of the idea of the tribe as a 'blame-pinning device'.<sup>3</sup>

It has been a basic theme of Zambian domestic policy to rid itself of tribalism. In his first speech to the Zambian nation as Prime Minister, Kenneth Kaunda

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<sup>1</sup> Deshen (1974:282)

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly demonstrated, for example, by the Commission of Inquiry set up by President Kaunda in 1971 "to probe charges of tribalism and rampant corruption within Government and the party" (Times of Zambia: 27/1/1971)

<sup>3</sup> Boswell (1974:312)

said:

We, as a Government, are committed to the building up here of a truly non-racial and non-tribal society, and I would like to declare here and now that just as I say that do not let what happened in the past make you racially or tribally bitter.<sup>1</sup>

Later that year, however, he felt bound to admit that a man's tribal background could be of positive value when he argued that people should try to remember the traditional ways of life - what he termed the 'good aspect of tribalism' - and at the same time reject the divisions, jealousies, and conflicts that are thought to be the basis of modern tribalism. It is very apparent that he and his government have been unable to achieve their goals in this line. Seven years after independence, one of Zambia's national newspapers was able to conclude in editorial comment:

About the most tired subject in Zambia today is that of tribalism. It is a favourite after-dinner subject in the households of some of our most erudite politicians. It is the subject of the day - everywhere - and what a pity this is so .... For centuries there have existed in Zambia about the same number of tribes as there are now. During those dark days, internecine wars were common, with the victors pillaging the houses of the vanquished and raping their women or abducting them .... Happily these days are gone and forgotten. Or are they? We ask this question because the present concern over tribalism is about as ruinous to unity in Zambia as were the tribal wars of yore.<sup>2</sup>

In 1971, at the time of this study, tribalism was undoubtedly regarded as the primary force in Zambian politics. As has already been noted, the divisions within the country appeared to deepen in the years after independence.

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<sup>1</sup> Legum (1966:73)

<sup>2</sup> Sundays Times of Zambia, 25/4/1971



Much of the conflict that arose has been focused on the urban areas which "reflect serious and growing divisions ... which make a mockery of the motto 'One Zambia, One Nation'".<sup>1</sup> Because of its dominant position within the political structure, the effect of these divisions was particularly evident in the ruling party UNIP which had become, at independence, the agency of representation and the source of government. Since independence UNIP has maintained, indeed increased, its strength over political opposition, until in 1971 all other parties were declared illegal. Essentially UNIP had been put forward as the agency of a new, modern, independent Zambia. Loyalty to the party was loyalty to Zambia; opposition to UNIP was opposition to the State. Such a viewpoint is implicitly contained within the emergence of the one-party state that is now Zambia. But at the same time UNIP itself has been continually plagued by deep conflicts within its own organisation to the extent that in 1969 President Kaunda was forced to dissolve the Central Committee of the party in order to "reunify it in the face of tribal violence".<sup>2</sup>

Superficially at least, the formal political structure of Zambia is seen to be centred around a variety of sectional interests which appear to be coincident with ethnic cleavages. Cohen has suggested that 'political ethnicity', though universal, has been particularly striking in the new independent states of the Third

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<sup>1</sup> Pettman (1974:89)

<sup>2</sup> The Guardian, 26/8/1969

World. This has come about largely

because under colonial rule some ethnic groups succeeded in gaining a great deal of power while others became under-privileged.

With independence, the under-privileged closed their ranks to redress the balance whilst the privileged had to close their ranks to retain their privileges.<sup>1</sup>

Ethnicity, by definition, involves interactions between members of different ethnic groups. Obviously these interactions are likely to be most intense and concentrated within urban areas. But it is by no means an urban phenomenon as such. Similarly, political activity within new emergent states is often focused around cities, and particularly the capitals. Yet the politics of an African state involves a much wider environment. We cannot then start from the assumption that, by studying ethnicity and politics, or rather the relationship between them, we are studying urban phenomena. What we are trying to find out is the way in which particular urban situations affect these phenomena.

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen (1969:192)

## CHAPTER 9

### POLITICAL CHANGE IN ZAMBIA: 1951-1971

#### 9:1 Introduction

Zambia's political structure, even after independence, has been heavily affected by the process of colonialism. Northern Rhodesia had protectorate status, its white settlers never gaining full political control, and sixty years of British rule "created a structure of dependence on southern Africa, and of division at home".<sup>1</sup> In one sense of course, Zambia would never have existed as an entity without colonialism, and it was through the need to attack British dominance that a nationalist movement was first created. But the formal structure of Northern Rhodesia was designed to block any political advancement for the African population, retard any growth of national consciousness, and restrict the development of a political culture. However, as we shall see, it was impossible to repress all resistance even as early as the 1920s. Eventually, a nationalist movement was to emerge because the 'external political enemy', i.e. the British, produced a great need for unity and showed the "manifest

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<sup>1</sup> Pettman (1974:11)



political irrelevance of linguistic and provincial differences".<sup>1</sup> The drive for Federation with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland sharply increased African opposition during the early 1950s and its achievement led to a decline in British credibility and further demands for a universal franchise. As a result the movement to independence accelerated rapidly and there was a "fairly peaceful and evolutionary, albeit hasty, transition to political independence".<sup>2</sup> It is within this framework that the political institutions of pre-independence Northern Rhodesia must be understood.

#### 9:2 The Colonial Framework

At the beginning of the 1950s political activity took place within a formal structure that gave little more than token representation to the African population, even though they were in the majority by over 60 to 1. This structure was centered on a hierarchy of Councils overseen by the Governor who headed the executive branch of government and who presided over the two top bodies, the Executive Council (EXCO) and the Legislative Council (LEGCO). The higher levels were virtually totally dominated by Europeans and it was not until 1948 that any Africans were allowed to sit on the Legislative Council. It was this body that voted supplies and was responsible for local laws (including the many ordinances we noted in

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<sup>1</sup> Molteno (1974:65)

<sup>2</sup> Tordoff and Molteno (1974:11)

previous chapters). In 1951 it was made up of 22 members and the impact of the two African members must have been minimal.

Five years earlier, the administration had set up the African Representative Council made up entirely of Africans from all over the country. However, it had no legislative power, could not impose its values on the administration and, though it did provide a focus for nation-wide discussion amongst Africans, they "had few illusions about its power to change the course of events".<sup>1</sup> Representatives to this Council were nominated from below by a series of regional (later 'provincial') councils, also instituted during the 1940s, which contained representatives from both rural and urban areas. Hall contends that these provincial councils had a considerable impact and comments that "under the benevolent chairmanship of provincial administration officials, members could list their grievances about racial discrimination, the lack of educational opportunities, housing conditions, and (most important of all) the intentions of the white politicians in the Legislative Council."<sup>2</sup> But, once again, they had no effective power and were little more than sounding boards whose members were drawn from a restricted sector of the population and over whom colonial officials were able to maintain a good deal of control. It seems evident that the introduction of these various bodies at

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<sup>1</sup> Hall (1965:123)

<sup>2</sup> Hall (1965:121)

this stage was an attempt to contain African opinion and potential opposition, but it can also be argued that they brought together Africans from various parts of the country from both rural and urban areas and, as such, hastened the process of political consciousness, national identity, and ultimately independence.

The base of this 'political' pyramid that was being created was centred, in the urban areas, on the Urban Advisory Councils (UAC).<sup>1</sup> Such Councils acted as a link between the local urban population and the regional and national levels by nominating two members to the appropriate provincial council (See Diagram 9.1). Though they varied greatly from town to town, they were all intended to represent the overall urban population, and their members were chosen from a variety of groups within the town. Thus in Livingstone delegates were brought in from the local native welfare association, the Railways and Sawmills compounds, and two others were nominated by the District Commissioner to represent workers in various minor industries and also domestic servants. All but the latter two were elected at polls "democratically conducted at public meetings".<sup>2</sup> The first UACs had been formed on the Copperbelt around 1938,

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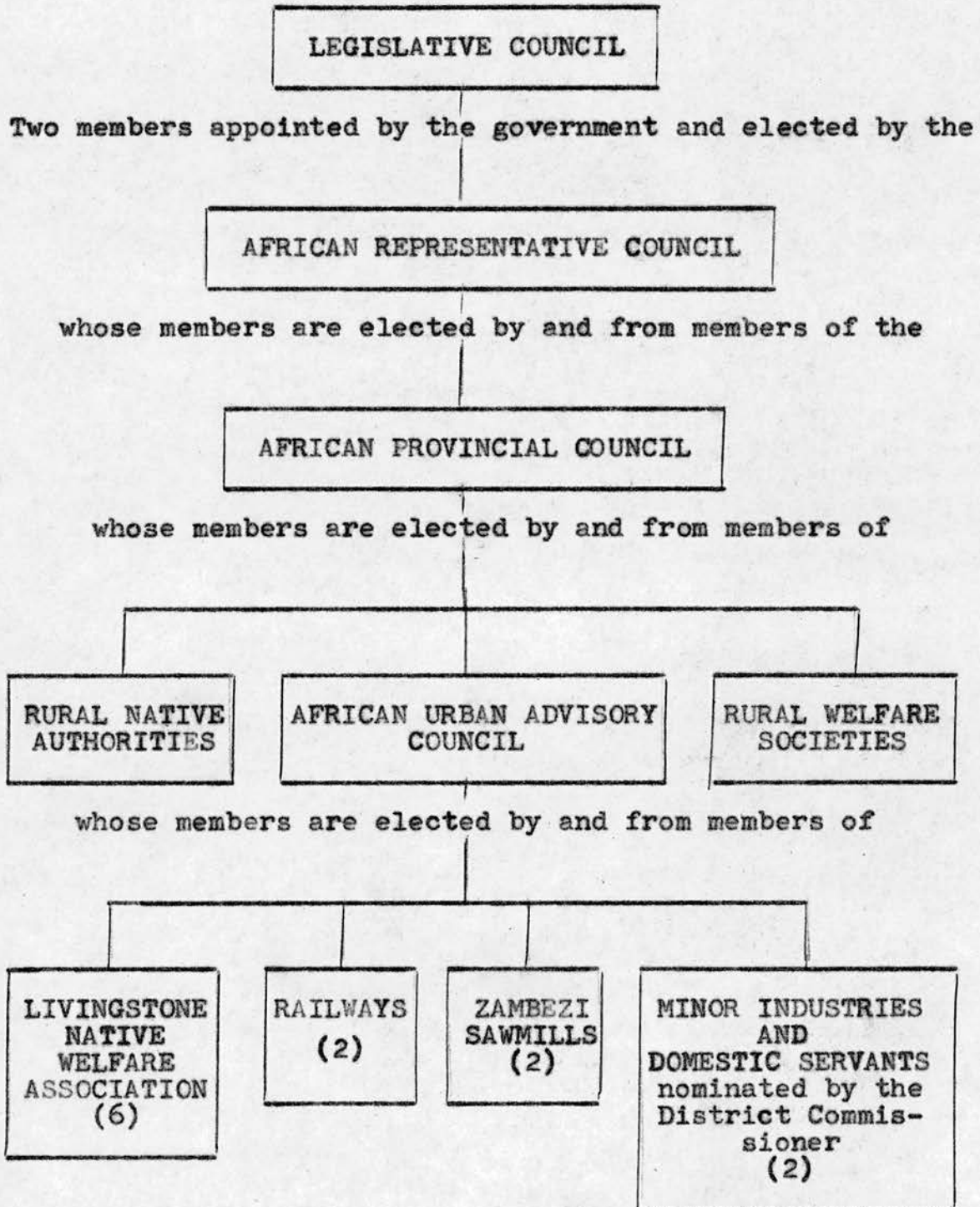
<sup>1</sup> Sometimes known at the beginning as 'native advisory councils' or 'urban advisory committee'.

<sup>2</sup> Native Affairs 1949, p71. In contrast, Kitwe UAC was made up of nine tribal representatives, members of the Kitwe African Society, delegates from the War Fund Committee and others nominated by the District Commissioner; See Clay (1948:38)



DIAGRAM 9.1

THE PLACE OF LIVINGSTONE WITHIN THE FORMAL  
POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF NORTHERN RHODESIA <sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on Clay (1949:38)

apparently as a reaction to a developing feeling amongst some senior colonial administrators that a certain degree of controlled political activity amongst Africans would be a healthy thing.<sup>1</sup> The objectives of the UAC were to keep the District Commissioner in touch with African opinion; to act as a mouthpiece of government; and to advise the District Commissioner on African welfare. In more general terms they were to act as a "controlled liaison between the administration and 'Africans working in the towns'".<sup>2</sup>

The success and development of these UACs was very uneven. The Livingstone UAC, for example, was defunct for a period during the mid-1940s, and only re-emerged in 1949 when it commenced to meet monthly and took on the primary function of advising the municipal council on African matters. On the whole, the councils appear to have suffered a lack of credibility. Gann claims that the "vast majority of Africans ... displayed little interest in these bodies which remained the prerogative of a small elite which thereby gained convenient access to the 'D.C.'s' office."<sup>3</sup> Certainly they gained little respect from the colonial administrators who

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<sup>1</sup> Most notably Lord Hailey who said in 1938 that African politics needed to be handled 'sympathetically'.

<sup>2</sup> Hall (1965:120)

<sup>3</sup> Gann (1964:349-50). Very few of Malota's older inhabitants had even heard of the UAC, never mind the higher councils. Many of them believed that, before the existence of political parties, the compound manager had been their official representative.

persistently complained that the councils were used to further the political ambitions of individual Africans. Thus in its first year of reconstitution the District Commissioner commented of the Livingstone UAC that the "Council is overweighted by the Barotse element, which is unfortunate as the Lozi peoples are not a majority in Livingstone, but inevitable as they provide nearly all the 'politicians' in the town".<sup>1</sup> This complaint was reiterated annually and in 1951 the District Commissioner elaborated when he said:

Generally their work has been disappointing. They are an unbalanced body dominated by the six representatives of the Livingstone Welfare Society who are primarily a political society and the balance of numbers drawn from the railways, sawmills, and contractor's compounds do not play a very enterprising part. The Council needs a more democratic basis and election by wards will no doubt be the solution; meanwhile it provides a safety valve and a means of taking African opinion, and in the early stages one should not expect too much.<sup>2</sup>

Though the very wording of this statement gives us a good deal of insight into how colonial administrators really viewed the 'political' role of Africans, he is undoubtedly correct in his belief that, in terms of social and economic composition, the Livingstone UAC was not representative. Not only was it tribally unbalanced, but the majority of members were from the better educated, better paid sector of the population. This was virtually inevitable because of the way in which the administrators decided to select its members: half from the Livingstone Welfare Society, accepted as being "for the better

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1949, p.71

<sup>2</sup> Native Affairs 1951, p.68



educated class of natives",<sup>1</sup> and the other half wage-employees from specific sectors of industry. Equally, it was inevitable that the UACs would attract the politically ambitious as higher office could only be obtained by climbing through the formal structure of councils that had been built up, and which only recruited for a particular level from the level below.<sup>2</sup>

We can see then that, in terms of the formal structure of Northern Rhodesian politics, the 1940s brought in a number of changes that seemed by 1951 to have effectively developed the political role of the African. It appears from this, on the surface at least, that political consciousness and self-assertion were phenomena that emerged in the period immediately after the Second World War. But I would argue that these were changes that only reflected the delayed reaction of the colonial administrators to movements that had been taking place, and building up over a much longer period of time. In this sense, the development of these institutions was an attempt on the part of the administration to bring under their control political activity that was going on outside of the formal structure. By giving the Africans limited concessions, they hoped to avoid the development of other forms of political activity, in particular the formation

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1936.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note, for example, that one of the first two Africans to sit on the highest body, the Legislative Council, was Nelson Nalumango, a Lozi who had started his political career in 1930 as one of the founder members of the Livingstone Welfare Society.

of political parties.

We have only to look at the role of the Welfare Societies and Associations to realise that this sort of activity had been going on for a considerable period of time. By 1951 they had been in existence for over 25 years and, although the Administration had hoped they would develop into "debating societies and social clubs",<sup>1</sup> they had always had some sort of political content though they were careful at first not to be seen as critical of the government. Indeed the constitution of the first one, set up at Mwenzo in 1923, stated specifically that:

The aid of the association is neither directly nor indirectly to subvert the authority of the government or of any lawful establishment, nor to induce the community to do so. It is rather one of the helpful means of developing the country in the hands of the two necessary connecting links - the government and the governed.<sup>2</sup>

This 'positive' aspect was usually stressed in formal constitutions with the result that Gann was able to speak of members as being "'loyalists' rather than critics of Government".<sup>3</sup> This was not always the view of administrators, however, and in its first year of existence the Livingstone Welfare Society was warned by an official

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Hall (1965:113). MacPherson (1974:39) contends that, though the formal constitution of the Nwenzo Welfare Society was set up in 1923, the group had been formed before the First World War and that "Nineteen-twelve is thus a more probable date for the formal establishment of the Association, which can be regarded as the first organised body of African political expression in Northern Rhodesia in the context of colonial rule."

<sup>3</sup> Gann (1964:270)

because of its tendency to "indulge in a good deal of irrelevant and rather wild talk on extraneous matters".<sup>1</sup>

By 1930 the Nwenzu association had died out, but there were major associations at Mazabuka, Broken Hill, Ndola, and Livingstone. Livingstone had the biggest and most active group, one of its first meetings being attended by over 350 people.<sup>2</sup> It was relatively short-lived, partly because of pressure from the authorities, and after 1935 was dormant until there was a national resurgence of Welfare Society activity at the beginning of the 1940s. In 1946 there was a major breakthrough at the national level when the Northern Rhodesian Federation of Welfare Societies was formed but, ironically, this was the beginning of the end of the Welfare Societies as such for there were a number of forces at work that would soon make them redundant. But during the 1940s they were the focus of a number of changes that were taking place in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>3</sup> The leaders of the societies that grew up in most of the major towns tended to be men who were better educated, better paid, and essentially urban dwellers. Though many were still recent migrants to the towns, their commitment was to the urban situation which

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1930, p.9. This 'wild talk' was frequently centred on the subject of racial discrimination and in particular the large numbers of arrests made that year of Africans who had walked on the pavements of the town.

<sup>2</sup> Hall (1965:116)

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the changing role of one particular welfare society during this period, see Epstein (1958:66-72).



provided the focus for their ideas, expectations, and ambitions. As a result they sought a political framework that was specifically relevant to their urban situation. This the Welfare Societies were able to provide, unlike the formal hierarchy of the councils which "deliberately looked back to the tribal areas".<sup>1</sup> They were attractive for a number of reasons. They were specifically urban, African and 'modern'. They were not 'official' in the way that the various councils were, and consequently they had a certain independence from government both in terms of membership and action. The result was that they had a vitality that the other political institutions did not.

Inevitably, they came into conflict with these other institutions. Though there was a good deal of overlap with the formal structure - for example, the dominance of the Livingstone UAC by the Livingstone Welfare Society - increasingly the societies seemed to be taking over the functions of the UACs. In Luanshya the influence of the Welfare Society became so great that the UAC had become virtually 'moribund' by 1946.<sup>2</sup> It was only with the astute introduction of the Provincial Councils, which made higher political office a more easily attainable goal, that the UACs regained any of their earlier strength. Epstein has vividly shown how the threat of the Welfare Societies forced major changes in the political structure with the introduction of new representative bodies and a

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:83)

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1958:72)

takeover of the UACs by the younger, more urbanized, element.

The political institutions developed by the colonial administration reflected, of course, their attitude towards urban dwellers generally at this time. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the migrant in town was regarded essentially as a temporary inhabitant who would never really lose his rural origins. The hierarchy of advisory bodies that was set up was based to a certain extent on this assumption. But it was even more explicitly demonstrated in the other major institution of this era, the Tribal Representative or Elder. Elders existed in all urban areas, in one form or another, throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. They were originally introduced on the Copperbelt as early as 1931, and were initially used by the Mine Compound Managers as a primary link between the mining companies and the African population. Their role extended to almost every aspect of life on the mine compounds although they had no actual legal power and were very much dependent upon the voluntary submission of the population to their authority. They were men of considerable prestige and regarded themselves as 'fathers of the location'.<sup>1</sup> Originally they formed the basis of the administrative structure.<sup>2</sup> Though the system was originally confined to the mine compounds, its apparent success

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein's study (1958) includes a detailed discussion of the role of the Elders. See particularly pp. 37-65.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Luanshya's original UAC was mainly made up of Elders.

caused it to be extended to a number of municipal locations. But their role was never to be as comprehensive. The mine Elders were specifically involved in the relationship between employer and employee. They played an important part in the solution of problems relating to wages and working conditions as well as the settlement of local, frequently domestic, disputes that formed the core of the role of the Elders on municipal locations, where the population was normally heterogeneous in terms of employment. As the role of the Elders developed on the mines, they came to be seen increasingly as a 'labour body', or as Epstein put it, "an embryonic organisation for collective bargaining".<sup>1</sup>

However, the two groups of Elders did have certain things in common. Their essential function was, as Epstein saw it, to uphold the established order of society; to be the guardians of law and morals; and to reaffirm the moral values of society. In this sense they were seen to express the deepest values of tribal, i.e. rural, society. It is hardly surprising therefore that the Elders would eventually come into conflict with certain sectors of the urban African population who believed that things were changing and that a new order was emerging which made rural values, and those people who symbolised them, redundant. As early as 1935, these conflicts were apparent, particularly when it was felt that the Elders acted as an arm of the European administration rather than as repre-

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:62)



sentatives of the African population. Their situation was particularly fraught when involving industrial disputes for which their framework of customary law could not possibly have any precedents.

In the late 1940s, the political structure of Northern Rhodesia (as far as the African population was concerned) was centred on three main points:

- (i) The hierarchy of 'representative' councils with the urban Advisory Councils at the base and the Legislative Council at the top.
- (ii) The Tribal Elders and Representatives
- (iii) The increasingly important local Welfare Societies.

These three groups of institutions were very different in nature, though in terms of membership there was a good deal of overlap between them. Over the decade the balance between them altered considerably with the Elders losing a good deal of support and influence as younger men, more committed to urban life than their predecessors, began to emerge as leaders of the urban community. The UACs also lost some of their strength because of the intercalary role that they were forced to play but, at the same time, they were the primary vehicle to political office and could not be totally ignored by those who had political ambitions. This was particularly the case when the Provincial Councils and the African Representative Council were introduced, for they considerably broadened the scope for those who were looking for office. It is in this sense that I believe that these bodies were introduced by the colonial administration, not simply to improve the representation of the Africans, but rather to control

the political activity of the emerging generation which was then based on the Welfare Societies. The societies could only be effective through the formal hierarchy, without which they could do little to achieve the changes on which so much of their thinking and talking was centred. The elaboration of the African representative structure was an attempt to divert political vigour from 'unofficial' into official channels rather than allow the dynamism of the Welfare Societies to get out of control, perhaps with the formation of political parties resulting.

But though these changes did result in, for example, the revitalisation of some of the UACs, the councils were to prove inadequate for the political needs of their African members and could not prevent the development of what was by that stage virtually inevitable, the formation of new African-run political institutions outside the formal framework. These eventually emerged in 1947 and 1948 in the form of Trade Unions and the first political party. Both had been the focus of much discussion for several years<sup>1</sup>, and in 1948 the two-year old Federation of Welfare Societies was disbanded and reconstituted as the Northern Rhodesian Congress, to become the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress three years later. The relationship between the Welfare Societies and 'Congress' remained close for a number of

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<sup>1</sup> An African Congress had been set up, very briefly, as early as 1937 and the idea was mooted several times during the early 1940s but with no success. [See Hall (1965:119-23)]. A shop assistant's Trade Union was set up in 1947.

years with some of the societies becoming Congress branches and others affiliating, and acting as a base for, the party. 1948 also saw the formation of the African Mineworkers Union which was quickly to become the biggest, best organised and most powerful union in Northern Rhodesia.

By 1951, therefore, the political structure of Northern Rhodesia was becoming increasingly diversified and was in a considerable state of flux. Certain bodies were waning in strength and would soon disappear; others were emerging which, though they would suffer setbacks, would provide the basis for a new political structure. But, specific institutions apart, a definite trend was obvious. There was a movement from a structure set up and controlled by the colonial administration and highly dependent upon rural-based values, to a series of institutions derived from the urban situation which were explicitly run by Africans for Africans.

### 9:3 Politics in Livingstone - 1951

The Copperbelt was the focal point of many of the changes that were going on in Northern Rhodesia, primarily because of its large and relatively long established industrial labour force. Livingstone, though the oldest settlement, was still a comparatively small town and was, in many ways, cut off from the main flow of events in the country. It was also, as the administration constantly pointed out, heavily dominated (both statistically and politically) by migrants from Barotseland, and, in parti-



cular, members of the Lozi tribe. The political structure of the town was based on the framework that I have just presented, but with a number of peculiar features which were dependent upon local factors.

One of the major differences between Livingstone and the towns of the Copperbelt is the obvious one that the town has no mines and therefore no mining compounds. As such the system of Elders that existed in the town in 1951 was subject to the distinctive nature of municipal location elders that I have already mentioned. The system had originally been introduced in Livingstone in 1936 when, ironically enough, it was considered that the Welfare Societies would "gradually develop into debating societies and social clubs ... and their places will be taken by councils of natives, chosen from tribal status rather than educational attainment such as are being established by the Local Authorities at Mazabuka and Livingstone".<sup>1</sup> The Welfare Association in Livingstone had been very strong having started as a 'reading circle' in 1926, but by 1935 had virtually become defunct, partly because of a campaign of ridicule on the part of the administration who, from the very beginning, suspected the goals of the society and were unhappy about the considerable support that it had initially gained. The relatively early formation of a system of Elders was probably a reaction to this, particularly as it was being claimed on the Copperbelt that the Elder system filled in a 'big blank'. Because it was

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<sup>1</sup> Native Affairs 1936

introduced by the municipal authorities, the system was necessarily centred on the main municipal compound which, at that time, was Malota. By 1951 the administrative area known as 'The Municipal Compound' had been substantially expanded to include what are now known as Maramba and Libuyu, but Malota had continued to provide the focus for the elders. These elders seem to have performed very similar functions to those of the Elders that Epstein studied on the municipal location at Luanshya. An Ngoni man who had lived on Malota since 1928, and who had been the Elder for his tribe from 1937 until 1942, defined his job in the following manner:

When the population in Malota got larger, tribal elders were needed but before this all civil cases were heard at Chief Mukuni's headquarters some few kilometres east of Livingstone .... Tribal Elders were used many times for different things. We were sometimes called to the Court to help the judges. We administered African customary law subject to direction from the Courts. The Elders had to decide civil cases up to a total of £100 (more in the case of inheritance or matrimonial cases); we could impose prison up to one year, beatings for males up to 12 strokes ... but as the Elders provided many services, so the rights were enjoyed by the residents only in so far as they recognised and respected the Elders and carried out their civil duties.

Apart from the general benefits of protection and an opportunity for a fuller life which all Malotan residents had, there were immediate advantages, (i) safety and security (ii) educational grants for orphans and help for destitutes.

The Elders, claimed this man, had sufficient authority "for even the District Commissioner to show respect". It is not clear exactly how many Elders there were on Malota. Luanshya had, on its municipal location, 23 Elders representing 20 tribes. It is known that there were over a dozen on Malota, and there were certainly representatives of the Bemba, Lozi, Ngoni, Luvale and what used to be known as the

'Nyasas', those migrants from what is now known as Malawi.

Livingstone's system of Elders became more elaborate in 1943 when, after a strike of Lozi workers at the Zambezi Saw Mills over the question of rations, a system of Tribal Representatives was set up on the Saw Mills Compound.<sup>1</sup> These Representatives were very much in the mould of the Copperbelt mine compound elders, acting principally as mediators in the relationship between employer and employee. In the absence of trade unions, unrest amongst African workers over conditions was a constant source of tension which needed some sort of channelling if it was not to get out of hand. However, workers were never very happy with this system, though it did provide some sort of representation, and Elders tended to become identified with the interests of management rather than workers. Their lack of credibility was intensified once the Trade Union movement got under way and the African Mineworkers Union made it a priority to seek the abolition of the system. In 1953 a referendum on all the mines was held, and 97% of those who voted were in favour of the abolition of Tribal Representatives (82% of the total workforce).<sup>2</sup> The Saw Mills Representatives had not lasted even that long, rapidly becoming redundant as the highly politicised Barotse workers (who made up 61% of the total population on that compound)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Berger (1974:89)

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1958:100)

<sup>3</sup> McCulloch (1956:70)



became involved in the new emergent political institutions. On Malota, however, where their role was mainly concerned with the settlement of domestic disputes, the Elders appear to have retained formal, i.e. administration-backed, authority until the later part of the 1950s.

In 1951, therefore, there were in Livingstone all the political institutions mentioned in the previous section. Geographically, ethnically, and occupationally, however, they were distributed unevenly throughout the town. Both the UAC and the Welfare Society, overlapping as they were, were dominated by the Lozi.<sup>1</sup> They were also dominated by white-collar workers, the majority of whom lived on the Maramba Compound. The Elders were effectively restricted to Malota, the power of the Representatives on the Sawmills compound having declined substantially. Writing ten years later, Reynolds argued that Malota had always been the centre for Elders, and had remained so even after the Copperbelt referendum because the population of the compound were "exceedingly law-abiding, perhaps as a result of their settled residence."<sup>2</sup> Epstein found that, in Luanshya, an important attribute of the Elders on the municipal location was their length of residence in the town, and also the fact that they were normally men who had been around long enough to have had the opportunity to become widely known throughout the community.<sup>3</sup> We have noted already in an earlier chapter

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 8

<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1962:3)

<sup>3</sup> Epstein (1958:51)

that plot-holders on Malota tended to be older men who had spent a good deal of time in town. This fact, together with the fact that Malota was by far the oldest remaining compound, was the original base for the Elders when they were instituted in 1936, and was geographically the centre of the large housing complex known as 'The Municipal Compound' (containing almost 50% of the town's total population) provides the most reasonable explanation for the dominance by the compound of the town's Elder system.

But even on Malota the Elders were declining. 'Congress' and the Trade Unions were moving to the forefront. However, the situation was complicated by the role of the Lozi elite within the town. McCulloch contended that the Lozi "never seem to have been particularly interested in political or Trade Union activity".<sup>1</sup> This is of course in direct contradiction to the views of the colonial administrators that we noted earlier, and seems to arise from McCulloch's narrow definition of politics. She herself talks at a later stage of a "struggle for leadership in the town between the elite among the Lozi and a number of 'foreigners' who are selected individuals in terms of wealth, education and occupation".<sup>2</sup> What seems to have arisen was a competition for power centred on two factions, one based on the UAC and the Welfare Society, and the other on 'Congress' and the Trade Unions (of which

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:8)

<sup>2</sup> McCulloch Ibid., 50

there were at least four at the time). The former group was heavily dominated by the Lozi, and the latter, though quite broad based, had a majority of its most active participants from the Northern and Eastern regions. This meant that 'outsiders' had control of those institutions which within a couple of years would become more attractive to the Lozi when the UAC was disbanded and the Welfare Society began to lose its significance in the town. Inevitably, this was to have an important impact on the development of politics within the town.

It has to be remembered that, at this point in time, politics in urban areas was very much the politics of the elite. Even amongst the Elders, tribal status, preferably a 'royal' connection, was an important prerequisite. It was inevitable that the emerging political institutions were dominated by the better paid and better educated. As a result, the political arena was controlled by certain ethnic groups which, for a variety of historical reasons, had access to superior educational facilities or were more likely to have acquired marketable skills, and as a result were very much over-represented amongst the elite of the town. As can be seen from Table 9.1, the Lozi, Northern, and Eastern groups, which were the three smallest, were significantly over-represented in terms of skilled workers, white-collar workers, high earnings and (with one exception)<sup>1</sup> high levels of education. The

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<sup>1</sup> The comparatively low educational achievement of the Eastern Province men was probably due, according to McCulloch, to the fact that the major tribe within this group, the Ngoni, provided nearly 25% of the town's domestic servants.



TABLE 9.1  
SKILL, EDUCATION, EARNINGS AND TRIBE IN LIVINGSTONE - 1951

	% of Total Population	% of all Skilled Workers	% of all White-Collar Workers	% of all Earning 110s	% of all men Standard III Plus
Western	20.7	11.5	7.9	11.7	8.0
Other Bi-Lateral	18.3	14.1	2.7	11.0	6.0
Central	18.0	8.3	10.5	9.0	24.0
Lozi	16.1	17.3	36.8	17.2	27.0
Eastern	12.2	20.5	13.2	20.7	13.5
Northern	11.0	23.7	21.0	23.4	17.5

Source: McCulloch (1956:48)

Northern and Eastern groups appear to have been particularly dominant in 'Congress' and the Trade Unions because most of them had some prior links with the Copperbelt where much of this activity had originated. The Lozi, on the other hand, had many years of experience of (and domination of) both the UAC and the Welfare Society. The division between these two factions is, therefore, a reflection of a competition within the elite for available political resources in which a local factor - the domination of the town by Lozi - became predominant.

In 1951 the future trends were becoming increasingly obvious. The seeds of a nationalist movement had been sown many years before, but were now beginning to sprout. The political party and the Trade Union looked likely to become the mechanisms through which Africans would seek political power. The institutions set up by the colonial administration were having to strive for survival and were surely on their way out. The next decade was to see an acceleration of these trends that took even the most ardent nationalists by surprise.

#### 9:4 1951 - 1971: From Colonial Protectorate to Federal Republic

However, though independence was in sight by the end of the 1950s, political activity during that decade was not a straight and uninterrupted line on the path of nationalism. Some of the older institutions showed a reluctance to disappear, and the new forms of activity were to receive considerable setbacks.

From 1952 onwards, the representatives of Livingstone's UAC were elected by ward<sup>1</sup> and this virtually ended the power of the town's Welfare Society which had previously been guaranteed 50% of the Council places, and which therefore provided a direct channel for the ambitions of the Lozi elite. The major consequence of this seems to have been that, as Mulford points out, the "younger educated Lozi, who lived on the Copperbelt or along the 'line of rail', shared in the general political awakening of the 1950's".<sup>2</sup> Increasingly, their support was focused on the ANC who gained rapid support in the early years of the decade. In doing so, they came into conflict with the Barotseland traditional hierarchy who showed a determined resistance towards any involvement in nationalist politics.<sup>3</sup> This conflict was particularly centred on the question of Northern Rhodesia's Federation with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The ANC had become associated in many people's minds with the fight against 'Federation'. The Lozi traditional leaders provided implicit support for Federation when an "official was sent from the capital of the Lozi Paramount Chief, to advise the Barotseland men in Livingstone not to oppose Federation actively."<sup>4</sup> This caused a good deal of conflict in the town, both between the Lozi and other tribes, and also

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<sup>1</sup> The UAC was subsequently made up of 5 representatives from Maramba/Libuyu, 2 from Sawmills, and one each from the Railways, Airport, Industrial and Malota Compounds.

<sup>2</sup> Mulford (1967:213)

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis of Barotseland at this stage, see Mulford (1967:211-228)

<sup>4</sup> McCulloch (1956:8)



between the younger and the older elements within the Lozi. According to McCulloch "this action ... led to a rapid increase in power of the National Congress, at the expense of the Lozi-dominated Welfare Society."<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, by taking away the youngest and most active Welfare Society members it probably dealt a final death blow to that organisation. It was ironic then that, when Federation was declared on 3rd September 1953, the fact that Congress had fought against it and failed sent it into rapid decline such that, by 1954, many people had begun to think that the ANC was finished.

For the ANC leaders, the next two years were spent in trying to build up party organisation. Up to this stage, as Epstein points out, "Congress organisation was built up through a large number of small nuclei or committees, each designed to organise the community as a whole on some specific issue, or for some specific purpose."<sup>2</sup> At the same time as they were building up this party organisation, a number of the younger leaders were becoming noticeably "more militant and more consciously nationalist"<sup>3</sup> than the then leader Harry Nkumbula. In 1958, the colonial administration's proposals for a new constitution precipitated a split at the top of the party hierarchy and the General Secretary, Kenneth Kaunda, and some of his closer colleagues - dissatisfied with what

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Epstein (1958:180)

<sup>3</sup> Pettman (1974:14)

they saw as an increasingly moderate line - broke away to form a rival party, the Zambia African National Congress. After this the ANC steadily declined. Africans became suspicious when 'Zambia', but not ANC, was banned in 1959. Four months after this ban, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was formed, drawing its greatest support from Luapula, Northern and parts of the Copperbelt Provinces. With its leaders in detention, UNIP was not able to organise effectively until 1960, and both parties remained regional in nature. UNIP's main strength was in the large Bemba-speaking area in the North.<sup>1</sup> In Lusaka and Broken Hill, both parties had large followings, but the small towns southwards along the line-of-rail from Lusaka to Livingstone were in the heart of ANC country. Mulford, however, did note that UNIP gained "limited interest in several railway towns, particularly in Livingstone."<sup>2</sup>

From the very beginning, UNIP placed great emphasis on effective party organisation. Kaunda, for example, always stressed the need to build a structure that would not only achieve independence, but would be able to govern the country after the immediate objectives had been achieved. The party followed the pattern of nationalist parties in other African territories by identifying itself with the vision of a new nation - Zambia.

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<sup>1</sup> This gave UNIP a great advantage on the Copperbelt where Bemba is the lingua franca.

<sup>2</sup> Mulford (1967:135)

Individuals, irrespective of race, who were willing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the new state were to show direct allegiance to its political expression - UNIP. Such a commitment should supercede tribal loyalties, regional and economic interests, linguistic preferences, allegiance to tribal rules, and religious affiliations. The party structure was designed to help, and, if necessary, force individuals to achieve this commitment, to become good Zambians. This has remained over the years a central part of government and party policy.

Similarly, Kaunda also took care from the start to ensure that the party's Central Committee was representative of the country's various major linguistic and tribal groups, hoping to avoid claims of dominance by, or favouritism towards, any one section of the population. Before long, UNIP clearly dominated most urban areas in the country. But this does not mean to say that divisions did not exist. Legum commented that:

**During Zambia's independence struggle an internal contest for power developed within the UNIP by the elites of the Lozis and the Bembas. Notwithstanding the fact that the Lozi traditional system was antagonistic to UNIP, and separatist rather than nationalist, this conflict was seen as a contest for power within UNIP between the Lozis and the Bembas.<sup>1</sup>**

Indeed during 1961 it was felt that the Lozi elite, who had the support of a large number of Lozi migrant workers, were trying to overthrow Kaunda. At the same time, it was becoming very clear that the ANC was essentially a tribally-based party, with its strength coming mainly from

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<sup>1</sup> Legum (1966:108)



the Tonga-speaking groups in the Central and Southern Provinces. Thus, although unity was the constant theme of both parties and independence the common purpose behind the political activity of the majority of Africans, a number of divisive forces were at work.

In the period immediately after the split between the parties, ANC policy did not substantially alter for it remained committed to the break-up of the Federation and to the achievement of self-government. ANC's leaders claimed that the split with 'Zambia' had been purely a matter of personalities and that ZANC, and subsequently UNIP, policy was no different from that of the ANC. Europeans, however, believed that it was a combination of tribal and personal differences that brought about the split. Retrospectively, it seems to me that it was approach and attitude, rather than overall policy or tribal background, that was the cause of the initial split. Regional differences may have subsequently become significant but they have been brought about, to a very great extent, by the different organisational structures and methods adopted by the parties. As a leader, ANC's Nkumbula was little concerned with the details of party organisation. Outside Lusaka there was little organised activity; party rallies and meetings were poorly organised and attended; and there was little evidence of the highly organised women's and youth brigades run by UNIP.

Consequently, there was never very much doubt about the outcome of the country's pre-independence election. The introduction of universal adult suffrage was bound to

benefit the party with the most effective and extensive territorial organisation. As a result, in the 1964 election, UNIP achieved its predicted victory obtaining, on the main electoral roll, 55 of the 65 seats. The popular roll gave UNIP 69.6% of the votes cast and ANC 30.5%. Even in Livingstone, in the very heart of ANC country, UNIP managed to secure its only seat in the Southern Province, though by a majority of only 489 votes.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence and development of ANC, ZANC, and UNIP brought about, in a very short time, representation by vote for the African population. As late as 1958, only eleven Africans were registered as voters. At the time of independence, only six years later, this figure exceeded one million.

Independence, on October 24th 1964, inevitably brought with it high expectations of change with the colonial framework rapidly disappearing and new institutions developing that would reflect the ideals and ideology of the new Zambian Republic. But, as Ross points out, many African nations have found out that "organising a nationalist movement capable of attaining political independence from a somewhat weary colonial power was far easier than the task of producing economic development and ordered social change".<sup>2</sup> Zambia is no exception and, even ten

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<sup>1</sup> The sequence of events, and the various electoral and constitutional changes, that led up to independence are very complex and outside the scope of this thesis. Mulford's work, Zambia: the politics of independence, 1957-1964 (1967) is the most comprehensive account.

<sup>2</sup> Ross (1975:1)

years later, the country had only taken the first steps in solving its major problems, that is "diversifying and restructuring the economy, re-ordering social relations between classes and colour groups, and establishing autochthonous political and governmental institutions."<sup>1</sup> As we shall see in the following chapter, Zambia has not become the egalitarian and 'non-tribal' society that was so much sought for, and promised by, those who fought for its independence.

### 9:5 Conclusion

Political development in the pre-independence era in Northern Rhodesia was consequent, in the most general terms, upon the relationship between what can best be described as the 'official' (administration-based) and 'unofficial' (African-based) levels of activity. Reviewing the development of the various institutions discussed in this chapter, we have seen how activity at one level eventually led to a reaction at the other. I have argued that, in the first half-century, the administration did not independently or positively promote the political interests of the African population, but rather sought to control informal activity by introducing institutions that were little more than concessions, and which were undoubtedly based on the assumptions of the administrators rather than the Africans. Thus, the emergence of Welfare Societies in the 1920s and early 1930s stimulated the colonial admini-

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<sup>1</sup> Molteno and Tordoff (1974:399)



stration to introduce Tribal Elders. It was the inadequacies of this latter institution that was a primary force behind the re-emergence of the Welfare Societies and, in turn, it was the rapid success of these that pressurised the administration into introducing the Urban Advisory Councils, Provincial Council, and the African Representative Council of the 1940s. In one sense, such reactions on the part of the colonial administrators when trying to resist the development of African political activity were more likely to further stimulate it. One of the principal reasons for this seems to arise from the set of assumptions underlying the actions of the colonial administration. In particular, there was the continuing belief, so dominant an influence on housing policy, that Africans in towns were not (and should not be) 'urbanized'. Thus they tried to impose an institutional framework that was essentially rural-based. For example, the introduction of Tribal Elders as a reaction to the Welfare Societies could not possibly satisfy all the needs of the urban population and, in particular, the emerging urban elite of younger, better paid, and better educated workers. They sought a specifically urban institution to represent their political development. We can see then that, in the broadest terms, political development has been very much structured by both the colonial situation and the process of urbanization.

But another important factor came from within the African population itself. The political activists of the pre-independence era were almost invariably members of the

African elite. Though we cannot obviously disregard the role of the 'masses', either urban or rural,<sup>1</sup> the nature and structure of the emerging political institutions were very much dependent upon the urban elite. This elite was not, of course, a unified body, status being derived from a number of possible sources. What was apparent, however, was that over a period of time education and income increasingly took over from factors such as tribal status and age as the basis for leadership in towns. The inevitable result was that a new group of leaders, and a correspondingly new group of institutions, began to emerge.

The third important factor was what can best be described as the 'local' variable, that is the effect on political development of certain situational peculiarities. This was investigated with particular reference to Livingstone. We saw how the dominance of the town - economically, politically, and historically - by the Lozi tribe produced a factional struggle for control of political institutions within the 'unofficial' sector. We also saw how the attitude of the traditional Lozi elite led to a division within the Lozi, the exaggeration of the gap between young and old Lozi, and the consequent acceleration of ANC activity and rapid demise of the Welfare Society. This was a vivid example of how, as was stated earlier, other factors - in this case age - could subsume ethnic differences in the struggle for independence.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Rasmussen (1974); Bates (1976); Ross (1975).

Political change is a complex phenomenon. In this chapter I have tried to analyse briefly the historical development of political institutions in the period up to independence and to abstract a number of factors which contributed to the form that this development took. But, as I have already said, independence is not an impermeable barrier. Political activity after independence is still very much subject to what preceded it, and I now wish to look more closely at this relationship by studying in some detail certain aspects of post-independence politics on Malota.



## CHAPTER 10

### POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICS ON MALOTA

#### 10:1 Introduction

Malota was thought to be 'a village within the town' and consequently it was believed that much of the political activity that took place on the compound was appropriate to rural, rather than urban, areas. Thus it was frequently stated that politics was ruled by 'tribalism' on Malota. But what substantive differences were there between Malota and the other housing areas in political terms?

The town was undergoing a number of dramatic changes at that time. On February 12th 1970 the African National Congress, whose strength was mainly derived from the surrounding Southern and Western Provinces, was declared an illegal organisation in Livingstone and some of its officials were placed in detention.<sup>1</sup> The ban was necessary, the government declared, "because these people threaten the security and safety of the State", and because of "serious acts of lawlessness including many political

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<sup>1</sup> The party had previously only been banned in Mumbwa.

murders committed in the past and particularly in the preceding three weeks".<sup>1</sup> Violent conflict was not uncommon between political opponents at this time and several of my informants on Malota had been beaten or had their houses stoned for being suspected 'Congress' members.

Though this conflict was only a prelude to what was to become a national movement, it reflects Livingstone's peculiar political status within Zambia. The relatively strong influence of the ANC in the town is an added factor in the system of political rivalries that has developed in the post-independence era and which tends to have centred on two main tribal groups, the Lozi and the Northern Bemba. We saw in the previous chapter how this Lozi/Northern competition grew up earlier at a local level, and similar divisions have arisen in other urban areas to the extent that it has become a national force. Increasingly the rivalries have widened into 'alliances of region', conglomerations of tribal groups affiliated on the basis of region. Contrary to popular opinion amongst many younger Zambians, there is no great traditional rivalry or enmity between the Lozis and the Bembas. Although both have a vigorous history of migration, both have retained strong ethnocentric tendencies and there is still a very active secessionist movement within Barotseland. The rivalry between the two groups is comparatively recent and began to emerge partly as a result of the resistance to Federation during the 1950s when the Lozi,

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<sup>1</sup> Times of Zambia, 13/2/1970.

unlike the Bemba, developed strong separatist tendencies. During the formative period of the nationalist movement the Lozis, who had arrived in the capital Lusaka before the Bembas, were strongly defensive in their reactions to the more numerous, but often less sophisticated, Northerners whom they suspected of wishing to dominate UNIP. Thus the modern nationalist movement was virtually born with an inner tension. This surfaced in the late 1960s when Bemba leaders successfully challenged the non-Bemba holders of some of UNIP's top posts with a resulting damage to the party's unity. This position is summarised by Pettman who comments:

Much of the political conflict and opposition within Zambia since 1964, and especially since 1967, has been within UNIP itself. Many of Zambia's deep divisions, tribal, religious, age and class, are well illustrated and represented within UNIP .... Much of UNIP's early pre-independence strength drew on the Copperbelt and Northern Province, and it has always suffered from the reputation of being a Bemba-dominated party. With the hope of overcoming these fears, Kaunda carefully balanced the various factions represented, and as a result the Bemba were underrepresented in terms of their numerical and party support, and economic significance.<sup>1</sup>

By 1970, Kaunda's problems in maintaining the credibility of his impartial role between the conflicting regional and ethnic groups became increasingly obvious.

Bemba dominance of UNIP in 1967 led to the formation of the United Party (UP) which drew its support "from discontent over Barotse Province's share in development and lack of Lozi influence within UNIP".<sup>2</sup> The banning of

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<sup>1</sup> Pettman (1974a:51-52)

<sup>2</sup> Pettman (1974b:233)



the UP the following year inevitably strengthened ANC in the region and brought the Lozi into some sort of tentative alliance with the Southern Province Tonga thus introducing the source of the conflict that was to lead to the banning of the party in the town.

These national level factors provided a broad framework for political activity in Livingstone when I arrived there in late 1970. A few months later these conflicts began to come to a head at a national level when the President was forced to suspend his Minister for Trade and Industry after the latter had made unspecified charges of tribal bias and corruption within the party. It was his claim that the Bemba were being victimised, and that they were intending to mobilise to fight the many injustices against them. The controversy caused by this episode quickly escalated, and the intra-party tensions that Kaunda had been battling to contain rapidly became public knowledge. In April of the same year he was forced to ban two 'tribal' groups that had been formed earlier and which were now described by the President as "dirty and cheap tribal mafias".<sup>1</sup> It is hardly surprising that within Livingstone itself the Bemba (or for that matter any Northerners) were, during 1971, regarded with great suspicion by many people. At a Maramba branch meeting of UNIP's Youth Brigade, a speaker accused the suspended minister of having said: "There will not be a non-tribalistic country until everyone realises that the

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<sup>1</sup> Times of Zambia, 19/4/1971

Bemba are the majority tribe and therefore entitled to the majority of jobs". A similar meeting in the nearby Linda compound reached the conclusion that party members should keep a constant lookout to ensure that there was no discrimination in favour of the Bemba when houses or jobs were applied for. Many 'facts' began to emerge about the role of the Bemba in the town. For example, a senior member of the Town Clerk's department was adamant, though with no justification, that the majority of the better jobs with the Municipal Council were taken up by Bemba. Such reactions reflected a general feeling within the town that the Bemba were, in some way, 'taking over'.

The politics of Livingstone in 1971 were therefore, in general terms, centred on three main factors. Firstly, the official monopoly of the town's political structure by UNIP; secondly, the necessarily 'underground' nature of opposition to UNIP; thirdly, the effect of tribal and regional rivalries, so predominant at the national level, on local political activity. It is within this general urban framework that political activity on Malota must be understood.

The compound has a number of unusual features which have given it a reputation for being in some way different from the rest of the town in terms of its politics. This is partly due to the fact that, as in many other matters, Malota is seen as marginal; as being outside the normal pattern of the town. This belief is exaggerated in political terms by three other factors:

- 1) The headquarters of the Jehovah's Witness sect are based on Malota. The ideology of this church excludes its followers from any political activity including, for example, acknowledgement of national anthems and flags. For many years, even before independence, followers of the church have been in conflict (often violent) with nationalists.
- 2) The practice of ritual circumcision that was re-introduced into the town by the 'Wiko' group of tribes in 1964 has particularly flourished on Malota. The practice was regarded as a recourse to 'traditionalism' or 'tribalism'.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) It was widely believed that Tribal Elders still existed on the compound and nowhere else in the town. This implicit acceptance of colonial values was seen as inconsistent with the needs of a new and modern Zambia.

All three of these factors are, of course, a direct contradiction of the stated goals of UNIP and as such contribute to the belief that Malota is a centre of opposition in the town. In the rest of this chapter, I wish to consider the validity of this belief by looking at two particular aspects of political behaviour on the compound. Firstly, I want to examine briefly the nature of UNIP organisation on Malota; and secondly I want to look, in some detail, at the belief that Tribal Elders exist.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The emergence of these rituals, known as 'Mukanda', within the town has been analysed in Mubitana (1969).

<sup>2</sup> The concentration on Tribal Elders came about for a number of reasons. Their existence, assuming they still do exist, covers a very great section of the historical period with which this thesis has been involved; they were an important institution on Malota for many years; and inevitably they focus on the question of the role of ethnicity in political activity. There were also a number of practical reasons. A study of ANC activity was, for political reasons, virtually impossible. There was already in existence Mubitana's excellent study of Wiko circumcision. And a study of the Jehovah's Witness sect seemed to me to be a major project outside the scope or goal of this thesis.



## 10:2 UNIP Activity on Malota Compound

Party organisation has always been a strong point in the development of UNIP and the party structure is, in theory at least, an attempt to get a high level of involvement right down to the grass-roots. Urban areas are divided into branches which are in turn broken down into smaller sections. UNIP activity on Malota is contained within the Maramba branch of the party, the offices of which are situated just off Malota. The compound is broken down into ten sub-sections, two to each of the administrative sections.<sup>1</sup> This sub-section is the lowest level of party organisation. In his study of Luanshya UNIP organisation, Harries-Jones noted that section officials thought of themselves as the "eyes and ears of the party",<sup>2</sup> and there was no doubt that officials on Malota felt that they had a supremely important role to play within the party. Organisation at this level varies from one sub-section to another. Official UNIP organisation at all levels tends to be centred on the 'eight-man cabinet' but, on Malota at least, this did not seem to be a strong feature. Though there were other junior officials, the sub-section organisation was very much focused on the chairman and the secretary or the vice-chairman. It is the job of these officials to arrange regular meetings on at least a weekly basis which any party member within the sub-section is allowed to attend.

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusion with the administrative units A,B,C,D, and E, the party-based unit will be called a 'sub-section' rather than the more usual 'section'.

<sup>2</sup> Harries-Jones (1969:308)

At these meetings individuals are allowed to bring up any problems or complaints that they might have. It is the job of the sub-section officials to help their members. It was a notable feature of these meetings that the majority of discussions centred on specific personal matters such as employment and housing (or the lack of them) rather than on more general political questions. The role of UNIP in Zambia is so pervasive that it is seen as both provider and protector. Harries-Jones noted how, in the months prior to independence:

The mutual protection aspect of section organisation began to die away and sections began to adopt the function of a 'friendly society' .... Active membership of the section became an option to be weighed for its advantages and disadvantages.<sup>1</sup>

Though there is a very definite element of truth to this view, it rather simplifies the position for, on Malota in 1971, there were a number of distinctive political aspects to sub-section organisation. Firstly, to those individuals who desired political office, the official party posts (prestigious in themselves) were the first step in the political hierarchy and the source from which the local party, especially the branch level, must initially recruit its potential leaders. Secondly, it is at this level that the objectives and policies of UNIP and the government can best be directed at the individual citizen, particularly in view of the comparatively low level of literacy and the lack of development of the various media. The sub-sections

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<sup>1</sup>Harries-Jones (1969:310-311). For a more detailed analysis of UNIP section organisation, see Harries-Jones (1975:120-123).

allow both party and government to gain some control over individuals and to minimise the effects of opposition.

Each of Malota's sub-sections has, on average, a population of just over four hundred, of which less than 150 will normally be adult males. This makes it a comparatively simple task for the sub-section officials to be aware of the activities of most of their potential members. Sub-section residents are only too conscious of this as well as the possibility of being tagged as 'Congress' members if their behaviour is not acceptable to the officials, who may well also be their next-door neighbour. Such a small unit (in political terms) means that a direct check can be kept on any active opposition, and also that officials can better mobilise and organise potential support. Attendance at routine sub-section meetings averaged between ten and fifteen, but this did not mean that there were not many more UNIP members who only became active when they themselves had welfare problems, or when they were needed by the party for some specific purpose. There were few people who did not know their chairman, and many of the chairmen had signboards outside their plots announcing their status. The party was always, as one man put it, "around us and behind us".

A good example of the truth of this was in the organisation of large political meetings. If needed, sub-section officials could quickly be drafted in - together with the party's Youth Brigade - to apply pressure, occasionally of a physical nature, in order to ensure attendance at important meetings. This happened



in the case of Livingstone's 1971 Labour Day rally, an annual event of some significance in the political calendar. The rally was supposed to take place in Maramba's football stadium, but bad weather and poor organisation meant that there was a very small attendance. Using weather as an excuse, the rally was postponed for two days with a new venue in the centre of the town. The reorganised rally was an impressive success with, it was claimed by senior UNIP officials, an estimated 10-15,000 people present. However, this did not come about without a great deal of work on the part of UNIP officials. Government and Municipal offices were closed during the rally. Local businessmen claimed that they had received 'informal directives' that supervisors should ensure that their workers turned up for the rally. The day after the original rally, all of Malota's sub-section chairmen were visited by branch officials and told to make certain that as many people as possible turned out. Their job was two-fold. Firstly, they had to see to it that everyone on their sub-section knew the revised time and place of the rally, and how seriously it was regarded by the authorities. Secondly, it was their job to exert pressure on those known to be indifferent or opposed to UNIP. The party had lost a great deal of prestige and was determined to get everybody, irrespective of their political persuasion, to attend. Over a period of twenty-four hours, a large proportion of Malota's plots were visited by the sub-section officials and it quickly became apparent to the general population that UNIP was taking the matter very

seriously. This, in itself, was a sufficient stimulus to most people and there was no need for physical violence. Occasional threats were made. Thus one man, a known ANC supporter, was told that his house looked very unstable and 'might fall down during the next rain', and another man who was unemployed but who had been promised a job by his section chairman was 'advised' to make sure that his brother, who did not have a UNIP card, attended the meeting. On the afternoon of the rally, the compound was virtually deserted.

In this sort of situation the sub-section is a valuable political device, providing an effective downward link between the formal political institutions and the mass of the population. In many cases, the officials had no problem in persuading people to attend the rally. A man may not attend sub-section meetings regularly, but at some future date he, or one of his family, may need the help of the party officials. More importantly, refusal to attend the meeting would be taken to mean that the individual was sympathetic to ANC and therefore suspect. To be labelled such was extremely harmful, socially, economically and even physically.

#### 10:3 UNIP Officials on Malota Compound

The election of UNIP officials on Malota's sub-sections was, in many cases, a relatively informal matter and was not organised directly by any of the higher levels of the party structure though, as in most matters, the branch officials kept a very strict eye on what was

happening. More often, elections seemed to be based on the decisions of relatively small groups of individuals who were active participants within the sub-section. Thus, the chairman of Angola<sup>1</sup> sub-section said that he had been elected by what he called his 'house committee', that is those people on the sub-section who held some sort of official position. On Sipalo the chairman claimed to have come to office "after discussions with some of my friends". Such decisions must be validated by the general party membership at a sub-section meeting, but it is obvious that, very often, the decision are made by a restricted group of individuals.

The relationships between the individual officials within a sub-section are normally intense, exaggerated as they are by spatial proximity. The main participants are likely to meet frequently, drinking and talking together on a day-to-day basis. It is at this level that the specifically political discussions seem to take place, with arguments over national and local problems being a central theme. It is at these informal meetings that the business of 'running the party' is carried on. Involvement in sub-section political activity normally necessitates membership of a close-knit network that is based, initially at least, on the physically defined neighbourhood that is taken to make up the sub-section. However, other factors are involved and it is these that give to sub-

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<sup>1</sup> Each sub-section has an official name, frequently that of a famous nationalist politician. The names are given in Diagram 10.1.



section organisation on the compound its highly varied nature.

Angola sub-section, for example, was run by two brothers and was locally known by their name - Shaabah. The elder brother was the chairman and had also been elected in 1971 to the Maramba Ward Development Committee. Both men had lived on Malota since they were children and though they were Ngoni, from Eastern Province, neither had been home for over 15 years. They had both come to office in early 1970 after the death of the previous chairman. They appear to have been continually active in the years after independence, and their takeover seems to have come as no real surprise, though it involved a relatively major changeover of personnel with the previous publicity secretary and the 'trustee' being dropped. The Shaabah brothers were adamant that this would have happened in any case because "we change our people when things do not get done". The plot on which the two men lived was a hive of political activity, particularly as the younger brother ran a carpentry business which kept him on the plot most of the day. Meetings were invariably held there and there was a constant flow of people entering and leaving the plot. As such it was virtually impossible to distinguish between friends and political colleagues. To be one virtually implied being the other.

Kenyatta sub-section was also run from one plot where two Bemba bachelors living together were the chairman and secretary. They had arrived in Livingstone together in 1955 after working on the Copperbelt and had

moved to Malota in 1960. They both worked as mechanics in the town. They spent very little of their spare time on the compound and were mostly to be found with other Bemba in various bars around the town. Despite their long period on Malota, they were still treated as 'outsiders' by their neighbours who became increasingly suspicious of their activities during 1971. Attendance at sub-section meetings seemed to be virtually restricted to a few officials and involvement on the part of the rest of the sub-section residents was almost nil, with very little of the welfare activity that I noted earlier.

Occasionally, the neighbourhood factor becomes less important. A sub-section cannot be isolated from the rest of the compound or the rest of the town. The residents must necessarily have links, through work, recreation or family, with people outside the sub-section. Politically, all the sub-sections are linked through the branch. Thus the chairman of Mulenga Sepelina, who was also very active at the branch level, had very strong links with the officials from Ngoma and Mainza Choma sub-sections and they met frequently at each others' plots and in a bar to the North of Malota. They had all known each other for several years and, although their conversations were very much dominated by political controversy, when they met 'socially' their activity within the sub-section was concentrated on the welfare and control functions. For this group of men, political activity was carried out at two distinct levels. One was within a group of politically involved, ethnically homogeneous,

friends and crossed over the boundaries between sub-sectional units. The other related to the carrying out of specific functions attached to political office within a restricted neighbourhood.

Sub-section politics do not, however, always rotate around such highly involved, close-knit cliques. Room is left for the politically ambitious individual who sees UNIP as the source of power and status. Thus the Mbundan chairman of Changufu was seen by others as an individual on his way up rather than as the core of some group within the sub-section. He had lived on Malota for 13 years and was well known as a young man who, by working hard, had made his way up and was highly respected. His political activity was thought to be, in combination with his attendance at night school, part of a general personal plan that would soon take him away from Malota. This highly individualistic impression was probably exaggerated by the fact that, for a period of six months, there was neither publicity secretary nor trustee on the sub-section after the two previous incumbents left the compound.

As we can see from these brief cases, sub-section organisation within the branch is both variable and flexible. Though the party provided a framework that constrains individuals, how the sub-section is organised depends to a very great extent on who exactly is in charge, how they achieved the position, and what specific goals lay behind their seeking the position. They are obviously also influenced by the nature of the support they have had in order to acquire and maintain their position. The combin-



ation of these factors gives each sub-section a unique aspect. But there are a number of factors common to the sub-section officials. They tend to be relatively young, mostly in the 25-45 age category. The majority of them were skilled, employed workers. Though I do not have the appropriate statistical data, they seemed to be significantly better educated than the general population of Malota and, of the officials with whom I had personal contact, only one did not speak English. Their life-styles were, by Malotan standards, highly Westernised and economically, as well as politically, they were undoubtedly part of the compound's elite.

#### 10:4 Ethnicity and Political Office on Malota Compound

However, the most striking feature of the sub-section officials on Malota is their dominance by two ethnic groups. Diagram 10.1 shows the ethnic origins of the two top officials of all the compound's sub-sections. In view of what has recently been said about ethnic rivalry within UNIP, this distribution is very significant for there are no Lozi and a very high proportion of the officials, almost 75%, come from either the Northern or Eastern regions. There were nine Bemba and six Ngoni holding such positions, with a single representative from four other tribes.<sup>1</sup> This domination by two groups that were very distinct minorities within both the town and the compound was unexpected and was, in terms of the Bemba at

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<sup>1</sup> The Lenje and Tonga are from the Southern Province, the Mbunda and Nkoya from North-Western Province.

DIAGRAM 10.1

ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF UNIP SUB-SECTION OFFICIALS ON MALOTA  
JUNE 1971

<u>SIPALO</u> Bemba Ngoni	<u>P. CHANDA</u> Tonga Ngoni
<u>M. CHOMA</u> Bemba Nkoya	<u>M. SEPELINA</u> Bemba Bemba
<u>KONOSO</u> Ngoni Lenje	<u>P. NGOMA</u> Bemba Bemba
<u>MBITA</u> Ngoni Bemba	<u>ANGOLA</u> Ngoni Ngoni
<u>CHANGUFU</u> Mbunda xxxxxx	<u>KENYATTA</u> Bemba Bemba

Note: I strongly suspect that two of the Bemba were actually from small tribes affiliated to the Bemba, but they insisted that they were Bemba. Changufu did not have a publicity secretary at this point in time.

least, additional 'proof' to the local population that the Bemba were taking over. Latent suspicions of the Bemba began to turn into open hostility and a number of wild rumours spread.

I was told on Malota, for example, of an attempt

to revive the Lumpa religious sect. This is a fanatical religious group, set up in the 1950s, whose leader Alice Lenshina claims to have been resurrected. In 1964 the sect was a major 'non-political' force which refused either to support, or oppose, the government. After a series of clashes between members of the sect and UNIP campaigners, the Lumpas rebelled and set up stockaded fortresses, mainly in the Northern and Eastern regions, and severe fighting broke out. Nearly 800 of Lenshina's followers were killed, the sect was outlawed, and she eventually gave herself up to the authorities. However, even in 1971, the sect was still in existence with 15-20,000 followers reputed to be encamped over the border in neighbouring Zaire. The sect's headquarters at the time of the uprising was the village of Sione (Zion) which is in the heart of Bemba country, and the church is regarded throughout Zambia as essentially 'a church of the North' and particularly of the Bemba.<sup>1</sup> The rumour that the sect had had a revival meeting on Malota swept the compound. But further investigation showed that the meeting had been held at the plot of the UNIP chairman on Mulenga Sepelina, a sub-section run by Bemba officials, and that the attendants at the meeting had primarily been UNIP officials from other plots on the compound.<sup>2</sup> It

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<sup>1</sup> For further details, see Rotberg (1961); Roberts (1970).

<sup>2</sup> We saw earlier that this chairman was highly involved with UNIP officials from other sub-sections and that much of his specifically political activity was centred outside of the sub-section.



seems likely that the ethnic homogeneity (against all UNIPs stated principles) of this meeting had been regarded by outsiders as essentially illegal and against the best interests of the party. The development of the belief that this was a 'Lumpa' meeting, which would very definitely have been illegal, was not particularly surprising in view of the political climate at the time. Such a story served to reflect and exaggerate the general belief that the Bemba tribe were turning against UNIP, and therefore the government, and represented a serious threat to unity. The extent to which the subsequent breakaway from UNIP, in late 1971, of the leading Bemba politician Simon Kapepwe; the formation of a Bemba-based opposition party, the United Progressive Party (UPP); and ultimately the setting up of a one-party state in 1972 can be seen as verifying this fear, or conversely as a consequence of anti-Bemba sentiment, is difficult to say. The truth probably lies in a complex interaction between the two factors. For the purpose of this study, it is sufficient to know that the fears did exist, as did the domination of UNIP posts on Malota by outsiders, and particularly Bemba.

In statistical terms, the Bemba, Ngoni and their associated tribes from the Northern and Eastern Provinces are very much a minority in Livingstone. We have already seen how, in terms of socio-economic factors such as occupation, education, and earnings, the migrants from these two regions have figured prominently in Livingstone, with only the Lozi achieving some parity. This dominance

was further dramatised on Malota where Western Province men, who make up the majority of the traders in the town, tend to be concentrated. It is within this context, of certain statistically minor tribes having superior access to various economic and social resources, that the national framework must be understood. The arrival of independence radically altered the system by which the ordinary individual was formally represented in the political structure. Right until the late 1950s many Malotans had remained dependent upon the elders for this sort of representation. Even after the formal abolition, certain elders appear to have retained a good deal of respect amongst some sectors of the population and, although their formal authority disappeared, they were still the people who could sort out a number of the domestic problems that arose on the compound. The institution of Tribal Elders was contradictory in one sense in that it ensured that all tribal groups of any standing were guaranteed some sort of representation and authority. Because each group had one Elder, they were all in a relatively equal relationship to the colonial authorities. Having an elder guaranteed an individual certain rights irrespective of his tribe. There were of course inequalities, for the colonial administrators were only too well aware of the relative status of the different groups. However, to a certain extent, the system of Tribal Elders minimised the effect of tribal differences.

Political parties, on the other hand, provided a number of positions open to competition without, theoretic-

cally, any major constraints on who exactly should be elected. As such, no ethnic group is automatically guaranteed representation at this level. The nature of the selection process at the sub-section level means that a relatively small number of individuals can obtain power, and that minority groups with the appropriate resources can gain control of the UNIP structure at this level. Under the colonial system of Elders, competition for office took place within tribal groupings. With independence, however, the field of competition has changed from one with ethnic boundaries to one with residential boundaries. This means that competition is, potentially at least, between members of different tribes. This does not mean to say, however, that members of a particular tribal group will consciously organise themselves in order to gain a monopoly of political offices. At the sub-section level particularly, it is the individual who initially seeks office and, if monopolistic tendencies occur as on Malota, we must try to understand why it is that individuals from certain tribal groupings find selection to UNIP office both attractive and feasible. The Bemba officials on Malota, for example, were not involved in any sort of concentrated and co-ordinated effort to control the compound, nor was there any centralised agency supporting the efforts of the various individuals.

The Bemba have been highly involved in national political activity since the emergence of political parties over twenty years ago. It has been argued that this high level of involvement can be related to the traditional



political structure of Bemba society. Both UNIP and also the Lumpa sect demand a high level of commitment and Roberts has suggested that:

(this) total commitment to the cause of the United National Independence Party found a ready, if perhaps temporary response among the peoples of the Northern Province .... Just as the traditional character of Bemba chieftainship uniting political and religious authority in a hierarchy headed by a 'divine king' may have served as a model for the Lumpa church, so too may it have predisposed the Bemba to accept a new political authority.<sup>1</sup>

This 'predisposition' may well have been exaggerated by the fact that the majority of the Bemba who move into the urban areas spend the early part of their migratory careers on the Copperbelt, regarded generally as "the political powerhouse of Zambia",<sup>2</sup> and it is here - in an urban, industrial milieu - that they have gained their reputation as an aggressive and dangerous political force. Bemba migrants arriving on Malota must, almost inevitably, have derived their basic perceptions of what constitutes relevant political activity from an arena that has a national, rather than a local base. However, this does not explain why the Bemba have been able to (or allowed to) gain such a strong grip on UNIP organisation on Malota, only why they might wish to. Nor does it explain why the Ngoni, who do not have such a tradition of centralised political activity and are not so likely to have worked on the Copperbelt, should hold one-third of UNIP posts on the compound. What then are the other factors that turn

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<sup>1</sup> Roberts (1970:549)

<sup>2</sup> Hall (1969:201)

potential into practice?

Firstly, there is the economic superiority that we have already noted. This provides resources that might help an individual to achieve and maintain office. Secondly, there is the historical factor. Eastern and Northern Province migrants controlled political activity right at the very beginning when the old 'Congress' first became established in the town. Related to this is the third factor; the element of competition that has always existed between these two groups and the town's most important tribe, the Lozi. This emerged at the very beginning of political party activity and can only have been exaggerated by the developing Bemba/Lozi conflict at the national level. Linked up to all these three, and perhaps the most important, is the fact that the Bemba and Ngoni are essentially strangers, outsiders, within the town. This is not to say that they are less able to cope with urban life than the other migrants, indeed they seem largely to have spent more time in urban areas than other groups. But most of them were born at a great distance from Livingstone, and have arrived at a later stage in their migratory careers. Since the closure of the Rhodesian border, very few of them are en route to any other place; they have come to the town to find work and to stay. Having found work in the town, though none of them would ever regard it as 'home', their job provides

them with some form of commitment to remain.<sup>1</sup> The rural base from which these migrants originate is normally sufficiently distant to make return visits severely restricted because of time and money. Nor are kin and friends from home as likely to visit them regularly. This is quite unlike migrants from the Wiko, Lozi and Tonga/Ila groups of the surrounding provinces to whom Livingstone is the nearest town to their homes and the focus for family, kinsmen, and fellow-tribesmen. Such men can both make and receive visits more easily. The result is that Northern and Eastern men are much more dependent upon the work situation and the residential neighbourhood to provide them with a network of social and political relationships. Thus when such men compete for power and prestige, it is within these situations that they will normally concentrate. As a result, there is a tendency for them to seek the formal offices that are available to them. Because of the pervasive nature of UNIP sub-section organisation (all Zambian urban dwellers are involved), such posts are the most easily available. Added to this, the small and direct network of relationships involved in the selection process makes it easier for an individual with limited support to be effective. Ambitions can therefore be fulfilled at relatively low cost and high reward. In simple terms then, their superior

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<sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1956:59) also noted this feature when she observed that over 70% of Northern and Eastern men, more than any other group, could be regarded as 'temporarily' or 'permanently' stabilised within Livingstone.



resources make the Bemba and the Ngoni highly competitive; their outsider status makes them more likely to seek political office; and the one-party nature of the political structure within Livingstone at the time of this study, made UNIP office the most rewarding, if not the only, attractive alternative. It is the complex intertwining of these factors that has brought about the dominance of UNIP by these two groups on Malota.

UNIP is not, like some of the pre-independence institutions, an urban phenomenon as such, though it is highly centralised in the towns and cities, and particularly Lusaka. It is intended to be universal, and its structure must allow for the organisation and participation of all Zambian citizens. As a result, certain general constraints determining party activity are imposed from higher levels onto the participants at the grass-roots level. However, what I have tried to show in the preceding sections is that the activities of individuals at this lowest level is by no means solely determined by these external constraints, and that there are a whole series of factors relating to the urban situation (both generally and specifically) that account for certain aspects of UNIP activity.

Political activity can be seen as emergent from the decisions of individuals working within certain constraints in the same way that, in earlier chapters, we saw the compound's social composition being a consequence of such factors. As I stressed earlier, the Bemba and Ngoni did not initially get together on Malota with the

intention of taking over the leadership of UNIP. But their origins, their previous migratory experiences, their similar 'outsider' status within Livingstone, and their tendency to have superior skills and education, combined to lead them to strive for similar goals within a framework of limited options. This did not mean that all Bemba would achieve, or even seek, UNIP office, only that they were more likely to because the combination of factors that made UNIP office a desirable and attainable goal, occurred more frequently within the Bemba and Ngoni population. But this interpretation is too static. Once this pattern of dominance emerges, it becomes in itself a constraint on the future decisions of other individuals who must, in turn, make their decisions and satisfy their goals within this pattern of dominance.

Ethnic dominance of UNIP on Malota cannot therefore be explained in terms of conflicts between ethnic groups at the national level (though these are undoubtedly a contributory factor). The explanation lies in understanding the impact on UNIP activity of the ethnic and socio-economic heterogeneity of urban life generally; of the position of Livingstone - geographically, historically, politically, and economically - within Zambia; and of the unique role of Malota within the town.

#### 10:5 Tribal Elders on Malota Compound

Many people, both on and off the compound, remember the Tribal Elders that existed on Malota in the years before independence. Many of them assume that they

remain. The Municipal Authorities argue, logically, that Elders cannot exist because there is no administrative provision for them. The most likely explanation, on the surface, for the continuing belief in their existence is that people were attributing Elder status to men who are important enough to have achieved such status if the office still remained. It seemed important that, in finding out the truth of the matter, a careful distinction should be made between 'big men' and those who regarded themselves, and were regarded by others, as Elders. This was not as difficult as anticipated, for the latter turned out to be a distinct cognitive category about which there might be some dispute as to its political and administrative validity, but not of its existence. After extensive questioning on Malota there emerged just three men who perceived themselves, and were perceived by a significant number of others, to be Elders. These three were:

#### A - SAMACONGA

I was told by a group of Luvala men that the Luvala Elder on Malota was Charles Samaconga, a businessman living on C section. When interviewed, Samaconga was adamant that he was only one of the few Elders that remained on the compound. He claimed that they had retained the authority to deal with personal matters such as divorce, adultery and debt. A Chokwe informant claimed that the 'Chokwe man Samaconga' was the only man with any real authority, for he could make out notes to the court and impose fines and other punishments. As we shall see later, this labelling of the man as both Luvala and Chokwe is not necessarily contradictory. Later, I was to meet Luchazi informants who, although they spoke of a Luchazi elder at 'the other end of the compound', regarded Samaconga as their Elder. Thus Samaconga was associated with the Luvala, Luchazi and Chokwe, three tribes from that larger group that are known locally as 'Wiko' - the 'people of the West'.



Samaconga claimed to have succeeded the previous Elder who had died in 1960, and who had been the last official Elder under colonial rule. He had been a close friend of this man for many years. They had lived on adjacent plots and one of Samaconga's younger sisters had married the second of the previous elder's three sons. The man died when it was already apparent that the role of Elder was virtually redundant. No decision had been made therefore, even at the informal level, on the election of a successor. But the Elder was not simply a channel of discontent between the administration and the general population for he performed, as we have seen, various welfare functions. This was very important, particularly on a compound such as Malota where wages and employment were frequently irregular. As a result, though the formal office might disappear, many people still felt the same need at certain times for an Elder.<sup>1</sup> It could only be at the informal level that Samaconga retained the role of Elder, for the arrival of independence meant that he could never be granted formal expression of such status.

Samaconga was a trader and had always been so during the 27 years that he had lived on Malota. A good deal of his business had involved bi-lateral trade with rural areas, taking cloth and household goods to the larger villages of what was then Western (now North-Western) Province, and returning with dried fish, vegetables and, increasingly in recent years, goods for the tourist market. During 1971 he frequently claimed that he was ill and unable to work, and it became increasingly evident that he was effectively semi-retired. A great proportion of his time was spent on a seat outside his plot where a number of old men gathered during the day to talk and drink. Together with the fact that his plot was situated next to the only large open space on Malota - a busy washing area - this gave the impression that Samaconga was a major focus for social activity on the compound.

#### B - LIONDO

A number of informants, including associates of Samaconga made reference to the 'claims' by an Mbundan man, Liondo, to be the elder for the Mbunda on Malota. It was very clear that these claims were not taken very seriously and that the man had 'no real power'. Liondo was a self-employed blacksmith who had lived

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<sup>1</sup> Harries-Jones (1975:159) noted, for example, that in Mikomfwa Tribal Elders retained most of their functions as late as 1962.

on Malota for only eight years. He was aged 'about 49', and used the plot of one of his uncles as a base for his business. The buildings on the plot included a covered work area with two hand-blown furnaces and a number of small, mainly thatched-roof, pole and dagga huts. The appearance of the plot, even by Malotan standards, was distinctly rural. All nine people living there were closely related to Liondo.<sup>1</sup> He had arrived in Livingstone in the mid-1950s and had first worked as a labourer for various construction firms. Rather than pay the 'extortionate' rents demanded in town, he and a few close friends built their own houses outside the town boundary. Their small compound began to grow rapidly and before long the authorities stepped in and demolished it. Having no job at the time, and therefore no chance of a house on any of the other compounds, Liondo had been forced to move onto his uncle's plot on Malota which then consisted of a single hut. Since then, he has developed his business, built new huts on the plot, and brought other members of his family onto the compound. Though the plot was in his uncle's name, it was assumed locally that Liondo was the 'landlord'. In fact, not only did he pay rent to the Council, but he was also responsible for the upkeep and welfare of all the plot's occupants. Liondo worked very long hours, with the assistance of his uncle, and rarely left his plot. Many people came there either to bring, or to enquire about, business. Most of the jobs were small scale involving the production or repair of agricultural and domestic tools. The nature of his work meant that virtually all his contacts, both social and professional, were within Malota. This was exaggerated by the fact that the majority of his relatives living within the town were concentrated on Malota.

#### C - LIMANDO

The final elder was a Luchazi man, Limando, who was referred to earlier. Like Samaconga and Liondo, he was a petty businessman and he had lived on Malota for over 16 years. During the period of this study, he returned to his home village in the Western Province, supposedly to 'visit his people and learn what was happening'. In fact, he had been seriously ill and his relatives had demanded that he return home to convalesce and recover. He seemed to be highly regarded by members of all the 'Wiko' tribes, but his absence meant that I have had to concentrate on the activities of Samaconga and Liondo.

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<sup>1</sup> For further details of this plot see p.230

Before going further, I wish to look briefly at the Wiko group of tribes. The word 'Wiko' is derived from the Lozi Mawiko, which refers to the large groups of 'westerners' who moved into Barotseland from what is now Angola and the North-Western Province of Zambia.<sup>1</sup> It is generally regarded as including the Luvale, Luchazi, Chokwe and sometimes the Mbunda. Though they are distinctive groups, they retain close links with each other. Thus Brelsford comments that the Luvale and Chokwe "have remained close".<sup>2</sup> Samaconga himself would sometimes refer to 'the close links that have always existed between our people'. Besides their important connection with the Chokwe, the Luvale also have historical links, through their ancestral frameworks, with both the Luchazi<sup>3</sup> and the Mbunda. Though there are undoubtedly a large number of differences of a linguistic, cultural and historical nature, and despite certain divergent tendencies since the 18th century, the four tribes are often thought of as a homogeneous group when compared with surrounding tribes. This homogeneity is unquestionably exaggerated in the urban situation. The names of the different tribes are linked closely in people's minds and there is a certain

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<sup>1</sup> The history of the migration of the tribes of this area, and the relationships that have developed between them, is very complex. Fortunately, it has been very well researched and details can be obtained from a number of sources, particularly Gluckman (1941); White (1960, 1962); Brelsford (1965)

<sup>2</sup> Brelsford (1965:2)

<sup>3</sup> White (1960:xi)



degree of flexibility, even interchangeability, in their usage. Mubitana, in his study of Mukanda circumcision ceremonies, found that it was a common thing for members of this group to call themselves 'Luvale', irrespective of their actual origins.<sup>1</sup> It was his central theme that the stress laid on the homogeneity of these four tribes by the re-emergence of Mukanda, in which they all took part, was essentially derived from the opposition of this group to the dominant, better educated, more influential Lozi tribe.<sup>2</sup> Though there was a tendency for a particular tribe to dominate Mukanda in any one year, to outsiders it was always something practiced by the 'Luvale' or the 'Wiko'. The Luvale group of tribes has always experienced this domination by the Lozi and, in urban areas, other groups from the North and East. The extent of this domination in urban areas was dramatically reflected in the occupational and educational structure of Livingstone at the time of McCulloch's study (See Table 9.1). As a group, in relation to other groups, it is apparent that the Western group of tribes had a significantly restricted access to available resources. It was Mubitana's argument that this lack of economic and occupational status amongst

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<sup>1</sup> Mubitana: Personal Communication

<sup>2</sup> Gluckman (1941) also noted this. McCulloch (1956:35) comments that the "Lozi tend to look down on the Luvale-Luchazi tribes, and the latter react with some hostility." But it is not only the Lozi who look down on the Luvale. Epstein (1969:102) points out that on the Copperbelt all Luvale are called Nyamazai ('scavengers') because they are the only group willing to undertake night-soil removal.

the 'Wiko' led to a need for some sort of unified front reflected in a re-assertion of common cultural values that would overwhelm existing divisions. Initially, such an argument seemed to be a plausible explanation for the fact that it was only amongst the 'Wiko' that the institution of Elders appeared to have remained on Malota.

#### 10:7 The 'Legal' Role of Tribal Elders on Malota

As the institution of Elder no longer formally exists, the meaning of the term, and what exactly it involves, must necessarily be defined by those who claim to be Elders and by those with whom they associate. In this respect, both Samacongá and Liondo had a similar conception of what constituted their role. In particular, both claimed that they had a right to judge and sentence people for misdemeanours of a minor nature. The descriptions that they gave of the nature of the 'court cases' in which they were supposedly involved contained suggestions of a high degree of formality and implications that their authority was substantial. They put forward an impression of a scaled-down version of the Urban Courts of the pre-independence era in which:

The law administered ... is wholly unwritten. Claims are brought before the courts and are argued by the litigants themselves in terms of the customary law of the tribes. The cases are heard and settled within a framework of procedure that constituted a fundamental ingredient of tribal legal systems.<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly, this impression was deliberately exaggerated

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:199)

for my benefit, but this in itself constituted an interesting phenomenon for it was highly unlikely that the maintenance of Elders and Urban Court-type hearings would be regarded as either prestigious or desirable by outsiders. Indeed, the acknowledgement of such activity to myself, or my assistant (a Lozi), was potentially hazardous if the information should reach the ears of the authorities or UNIP officials. Initially, then, it seemed very unlikely that these 'cases' existed at all but both men were highly insistent and were supported by their associates. Eventually, over a period of months, it became apparent that a number of situations did arise which were given the status of 'cases'. Below I have recorded four incidents which were relatively typical of those I personally observed and in which the two men claimed to have been called in as elders to make judgement. As will be seen, they show how wide was the discrepancy between the theory and the practice of their 'legal' role.

#### Case I

Two men, both middle-aged and dressed very shabbily, arrived at Samaconga's plot one morning in a very excited state. They were both Lozi and obviously knew Samaconga well. They told him that they urgently needed him to go to a plot on nearby D section. Two Lozi women, relatives of one of the men, were quarrelling and fighting and Samaconga was needed to help make some decision as to what should be done. Samaconga, escorted by a group of friends, went straight to the plot which was about two minutes away. On arrival at the plot no one was to be found apart from a young Lozi girl who told Samaconga that 'they have gone elsewhere'. Samaconga became very angry and said that he refused to wait around, and he said that the only solution was to recommend that the 'case' be taken to the local courts. He became involved in an argument with the two men about the wasting of his time, and then he walked away. Later



in the day, Samaconga said that one of the men who had approached him was the 'son of the Lozi elder', and the other a mutual friend. When my Lozi assistant threw doubt on the likelihood of a Lozi elder, Samaconga replied, irritably, that all tribes had elders and it was their duty to assist each other when needed. When this question was pursued further he said that he would not give help to 'these Northerners or Nyanja-speakers'.<sup>1</sup> He was, he stated, already the elder of the Luvala and Chokwe and would help the Luchazi when their elder was away in the village. At this point he became insistent that he would not help, nor would he be helped by, the Mbunda because 'they are not a friendly people'. The Lozi elder that he spoke of had been a neighbour and close friend of his for many years and they had both come to Malota at about the same time and from the same part of Western (now North-Western) Province.

## Case II

A woman aged about 35 came to Samaconga's yard and spoke to the group of women who were making beer at the back of the house. She seemed distraught and, for about 15 minutes, there was much noisy conversation. Eventually, Samaconga's wife brought the woman across to speak to her husband. The woman was Luvala and the wife of a good friend of Samaconga's. The couple lived nearby on C section. Her complaint was that her husband, a self-employed woodcarver, was going out drinking three or four days of the week and was therefore unable to provide money to buy food for herself and their three children. She felt that if Samaconga were to approach her husband, he would be more likely to do something about it. Samaconga left with the woman and returned thirty minutes later having persuaded the man to give his wife four kwacha. Samaconga commented that such cases were easy to solve because the two men were 'drinking friends' and the other man had often bought beer from Samaconga's wife.

A number of features stand out in these two incidents.

The most obvious, of course, is that they cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be described as 'cases' in the legal sense. They both involved the request for advice and assistance from a third party in the settlement of a

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<sup>1</sup> Nyanja is a primary language of the Eastern region and increasingly seems to have been used as an ethnic category particularly where national politics are involved. See, for example, its frequent usage in Tordoff (1974).

dispute between two other parties. Thus, in neither case, did the people involved directly approach Samacongá. Also, both cases involved the sort of incident that is a regular occurrence on Malota. Quarrelling and fighting, for example, have a tendency to become public events because the physical structure of the compound makes it difficult for them to remain private, and such incidents often attract small crowds. Onlookers are likely to join in, or attempt to mediate, and friends or kinsmen of the participants may be called upon to act as intermediaries. Both cases were centred around, and in this they were typical, minor day-to-day problems of compound life. Thirdly, all the participants were close friends, neighbours, or kinsmen of Samacongá. In basic behavioural terms, then, both cases were informal situations in which Samacongá was asked to mediate in a dispute between two people. But we must also look at the approach and the reactions of Samacongá to these two situations. Firstly, his interpretation of his role as 'elder' in these 'cases' was always retrospective and would emerge in the endless conversations that took place between Samacongá and his friends. It was then, rather than during the situation itself, that his status was explicitly acknowledged, mainly by people who were not involved in the case. In both cases, however, Samacongá appeared to consciously pursue the role of elder as far as the situation would allow. In all these sorts of incidents he would adopt an air of importance (some would argue self-importance) and as, for example, in the first case where the disputants disap-

peared, he would still insist on coming up with some sort of 'recommendation' however apparently ineffective or meaningless. Both in his approach to, and his conversations about, the incidents in which he was involved he tried to impose the role of elder onto the situation.<sup>1</sup> The second feature to emerge was the view that Samaconganga had of the relationship between the various tribes involved. The most noticeable feature of the first case, of course, was that it involved Lozi who are supposed to "despise the Lubale".<sup>2</sup> Samaconganga claimed that this involved no contradiction as Elders helped each other out. This was indeed the case in the pre-independence era, but the existence of a Lozi elder was a figment of his imagination presumably based on the fact that the 'elder' was the brother of a man, now deceased, who had been the elder.<sup>3</sup> The most important factor was undoubtedly the very long relationship that existed between the two families for over twenty years. It might also be relevant that the Lozi involved were not from Barotseland itself but from North-Western Province and that, by any standards, they were highly unsuccessful. Samaconganga also used the

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<sup>1</sup> It was probably the lengthy discussions of 'cases' that I did not observe that finally convinced me that the claims of Samaconganga and his associates about Elders and cases were serious.

<sup>2</sup> Gluckman (1941:15)

<sup>3</sup> My field notes show that when Samaconganga first spoke of the son of the Lozi elder, a dispute arose between him and some of his friends. At the time, I took the argument to be about the status of the son, but retrospectively I feel almost certain that they were questioning the existence of the Lozi elder.



first situation to clearly define the relationship between the various 'Wiko' tribes claiming that the Luvala and the Chokwe (his own tribe) were essentially the same; that the Luchazi were closely related; and that the Mbunda were very much outsiders.

I will, at a later point, return to look more closely at the significance of these factors, but first I wish to look at two incidents involving Liondo. In his case there was a good deal less of the day-to-day advice and assistance that was such a feature of life on Samaconga's plot. The incidents below are the only two that I recorded.

### Case III

This incident involved accusations of adultery. The husband and wife were both Mbunda, and the other participant a Luvala man. The situation came to a head on a Saturday night when the husband returned from a local bar and found his wife and the other man together. A fight started and a violent quarrel ensued with a large crowd collecting and a number of relations of the married couple becoming involved. It was not long before Liondo heard of this and went, with others of his family, to the plot because, as he put it, 'these are my friends'.<sup>1</sup> The quarrel continued for a further half-hour, with Liondo attempting to act as mediator. Eventually, he persuaded all parties to return home and meet at his plot early the following morning. About 8 a.m. the couple arrived with the wife's mother and sister and the Luvala man and his brother. Liondo, his maternal uncle and his son were also present. The Luvala man had made no denial of his part in the episode and, after the initial fight, had taken only a small part in the quarrel. The husband claimed to have 'dealt' with the wife, and all that Liondo felt was required was for the Luvala man to pay some sort of compensation to the husband. The Luvala agreed, apparently willingly,

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<sup>1</sup> It was actually the parents of the couple involved that were Liondo's close friends. It also seemed that there was a marriage between the two families but I was unable to find specific details.

to pay a sum of K40 over a given period of time. The group then broke up. Very little had been said and the general opinion was that the quicker the matter was disposed of the better.

#### Case IV

This case involved two young Lozi women, Angela and Christine. Angela accused Christine, who was unmarried, of having designs on her husband. Christine was upset and indignant about the accusations which she claimed were totally untrue. She was particularly upset because she felt that Angela was spreading the rumour all over Malota. Christine told Angela that, if she did not stop talking about these things in public, she would be forced to take action. The accusations continued and Christine, who was a good friend of various members of Liondo's family having attended the same church, one day complained to Liondo. He suggested that Christine should bring Angela along the following day. Angela agreed to the meeting, but brought along three other women, two of her sisters and a friend. When Liondo asked Angela why she was causing so much trouble, the girl reiterated her accusations which were once again denied by Christine. Liondo suggested that there was no real proof of any relationship between Christine and the husband and suggested that Angela apologise and make a 'token' compensation of K2. Up to this point, Angela did not seem to have questioned Liondo's role in the matter but with this 'judgement' a heated argument started and, after a short time, Liondo said that, if they wouldn't accept his advice they should go to the local courts and settle the dispute there. Some weeks later Liondo mentioned that Christine was attempting to take the matter to Court.

As with Samacongga, it is quite apparent that both these cases were situations in which Liondo acted informally, and not very effectively, as the mediator in disputes between other people. In one case he was not even specifically called upon. The idea that he was an 'elder' dealing with 'cases' came from the way in which he attempted to structure the process of mediation - i.e. his constant emphasis on 'judgement', 'decision', 'solution', and compensation - and the way in which he discussed (in the adultery case, at very exceptional length) the cases

with his family and friends. But it is apparent that the high moral authority<sup>1</sup> of the formal Elders was distinctly restricted, and that if Liondo tried to move beyond simple mediation to 'judgement' he was likely to find himself in trouble. The major participants in Liondo's cases were, similarly, people that were well known to him, and were not restricted to the Mbunda, or even the Wiko.

Briefly summarising, these four cases have a number of things in common. Firstly, they involve informal mediation rather than formal judgement. Secondly, the moral authority of the Elders is restricted. Thirdly, their actions are not restricted to one tribe, or even to the 'Wiko' group of tribes. Fourthly, they tend to arise spontaneously with on-the-spot reactions to the sort of domestic disputes that happen daily on Malota.

#### 10:8 Samaconga and Liondo

To make the claim that he is an Elder, an individual must believe that he has a certain amount of prestige and status. To maintain his claim for any period of time, he must actually have these. However minor the incidents in the previous section might appear, they provided a focus for both Samaconga and Liondo to assert their claims. More importantly, they provided a situation in which these claims could be acknowledged (or rejected). There were, of course, many other situations in which both men talked about being Elders, but these cases were the

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:58-59)



only situations I observed when actions were carried out that even roughly approximated the behaviour of pre-independence Elders. Without acceptance and support from others, their claims would become so ridiculous that they would have to be dropped. What then is the source of the status of these two men, and who are the people who support them and who are sufficiently aware of their status that they do not dispute their claims?

The two men are very different in many respects, but there are a number of similarities. They are both self-employed, both older, both relatively poor in purely financial terms, and both very much dependent upon Malota for remaining in town. Without their own plots on the compound, it is virtually certain that both would feel that they had no other option than to return to their rural homes. Other than this, they are different in many respects and, in particular, the type of support they receive for their claims to be elders.

In this respect, Samaconga is much more prestigious. Given different circumstances, he could well have been an Elder in the formal sense and was certainly the most obvious candidate to succeed to the last Luvala Elder. In that case he would have been a relatively powerful and influential man on Malota. He is very aware of this fact, and appears to feel slightly bitter about it. He has been on Malota for 27 years and is well known, not only on the compound, but throughout Maramba. He is highly regarded, and receives support from members of the Luvala, Chokwe and Luchazi. By these standards, Liondo

is much less well known and respected, and his status within the compound is significantly lower. His claims to be Mbunda elder, though known, are disputed by many other 'Wiko'. He has only lived on the compound a relatively short time (compared with Samaconga and his associates), and the nature of his business and his general life-style mean that his social contacts are very much restricted within Malota (though, of course, his business ensures that he knows, professionally at least, a relatively large number of people). Of the two men, his claims to be elder look much less convincing but the fact remains that he is able to continue making these claims.

What then is the nature of the support that the two men receive? Samaconga has an extensive network of contacts that he has built up over the many years he has lived on Malota. Most of his closest associates are older, long-term residents of Malota. They meet socially almost every day and many of them no longer work full-time. They largely represent what remains of the contacts that he had developed when he was the natural heir to the post of Elder. He frequently bemoaned the fact that many of his friends had died or 'gone back to their people'. His immediate circle of associates must therefore have diminished quite considerably (and continues to do so), but it remains sufficiently extensive to make him a man of some importance, particularly within the Luvala on Malota. It is from this network of friendship and neighbourhood links that his support is essentially derived.

Liondo, on the other hand, is not so old and remains a working businessman with many commitments. When he arrived on his uncle's plot originally, they were the only two of his family living on Malota. In 1971, over a six month period, I met a total of 21 relatives of Liondo's who, besides living on Malota, visited the plot regularly. All told, there were five generations and most of the people involved lived on three plots on B section. This physical proximity resulted in a great deal of day-to-day interaction, and casual visits from relatives were a common feature of life on all the plots. Most of these relatives are unskilled and unqualified and depend to a great extent on petty trading for a living. Most of the older men have been helped to find accommodation and occasional work by Liondo, mainly through his business contacts. It is to Liondo that they invariably turn in times of need. For instance, when his maternal uncle required a loan of K12 in order to build an extra hut on his plot, he went straight to Liondo. Many others continually receive short term 'loans' of K1 or K2. Even those younger men in the family who have jobs, have parents and children to support and need occasionally to approach Liondo. Though many people in Livingstone, and indeed on Malota, would have regarded Liondo as a poor man, in relation to the rest of his family he is substantially better off. In economic terms, he is undoubtedly the leader of his family. However, in terms of seniority he had a maternal and paternal uncle and a grandfather who have superiority over him. It is within this context of



a conflict between seniority and economic obligation that Liondo's claims to be an elder must be understood.

Samaconga's claims to be an elder are more credible than Liondo's, but even with him they are only accepted amongst that group of people with whom he has direct and continuing links over a period of time. Having acquired a good deal of informal status on Malota in the 1940s and 1950s, he was prevented from formalising this status by the movement towards independence. But in the post-independence era he has managed to maintain that informal status though amongst a diminishing group. He is now an old man and there are many recent immigrants and younger men who do not know him or do not accept his authority. Most of his 'supporters' are long-term residents of Malota, and his claims to be elder are backed up by their experiences before independence. As long as his claims do not come into conflict with the formal framework, and he only makes them within that group that accepts his authority, his claim is unlikely to be denied. Nor is the appearance of other elders, such as the Luchazi man, contradictory as long as their immediate social networks remain substantially discrete. Samaconga has therefore attempted to manipulate a formally redundant political category in order to institutionalise the informal authority that he has in post-independence Zambia.

Liondo has attempted to do the same but for very different reasons and in very different circumstances. Liondo's authority is based on his ability to provide for a relatively large group of kin who live in close proximity.

His immediate social network and his day-to-day social activity is heavily kin-oriented. His resources are superior in terms of his family but limited outside of that situation. Though most of his family are heavily obligated to him (and particularly the older ones), he does not have the seniority that makes him the natural leader of the group.<sup>1</sup> Those who are senior to him, though very much in need of his economic support, are very reluctant to see him take on the role of family head. His authority, even within his own family, is therefore highly tenuous. His constant manipulation of the term 'elder' can be understood as an attempt to institutionalise (and therefore increase) the authority obtained from his economic dominance of his kinship group. Because of the very restricted basis for his authority, his claims are rejected by most of those outside of his immediate network, and only grudgingly accepted by those within it. Amongst those who are indebted to him, he can continue to make his claims without too much fear of direct contradiction. Such a post, of limited attraction to others, is probably the only one that he could maintain in an environment in which there is great competition for political office. The long tradition of elders on Malota; the continuing belief that Malota is anyway conservative, rural and tribally bound; and the existence of at least two other men claiming to be (and to a certain extent being accepted as) elders,

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<sup>1</sup> Schildkrout (1974:212) comments of the Mossi that "First generation immigrants attempt to apply a Mossi value, that is the association of generational seniority with high status, in the urban context."

prevents Liondo's claims from being totally ludicrous.

The question that must now be asked concerns the extent to which the activities of these two men in institutionalising their status has a wider significance and, in particular, how is it related to the phenomenon of ethnicity. Why, for example, is it only 'Wiko' men who choose to use this particular title? Is it simply coincidence, or does it reflect the position of the Wiko group within the wider urban political framework?

#### 10:9 Ethnicity and Tribal Elders on Malota.

Despite the wishes or intentions of the colonial administration who were looking for a substitute for the rural chief, the Tribal Elder or Representative was always an urban institution. It was developed as a means of controlling, and communicating with, the African urban population, and was supposed to provide them with some form of representation. It could only exist (and was only needed) in situations where there was significant ethnic heterogeneity. However, its basic purpose was not to represent tribes as such, but to represent the urban population as a whole. The use of tribal distinctions was simply the most convenient and comprehensible method, in terms of colonial goals, of breaking up the population into manageable units. It was particularly attractive to the administration because, though undoubtedly urban, it stressed the rural origins of the migrants it represented. In this sense its origins lay in distinctions between black and white, and between urban and rural.



The post-independence institution of Elder is also a strictly urban phenomenon, but restricted (within Livingstone at least) to a small group of people in a particular residential area. Initially, its existence is dependent upon the fact that it used to be an official political post, and what little credibility it has is based on its previous functions within urban areas. The belief that the institution is retained on Malota is still widely held both within, and outside of, the compound. It is believed that its existence is due to the emergence of 'tribalism'. Given the title of the office, this is hardly surprising. But listening to the 'elders' and their associates talking constantly of the various tribal groups involved in elder activity, of the relationships between the various groups, and of the 'Luvala' as a category involving three tribes, it is difficult not to conclude that these elders are a phenomenon of ethnicity. As Schildkrout comments: "Ethnicity is relevant in a social situation even if only one actor acknowledges its existence".<sup>1</sup> But what type, what form, or what level of ethnicity is represented by this particular form of activity?

Recent literature would attempt to answer this question by reference to various frameworks involving such concepts as ethnic group, ethnic category, an ethnic continuum, detribalisation/retribalisation, the politics of ethnicity and so on. The emergence of this profusion

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<sup>1</sup> Schildkrout (1974:191)

of concepts and terms reflects the highly variable and complex nature of the phenomenon. The study of these elders does not fit easily into any of these frameworks. Their existence cannot be seen simply in terms of ethnic categories, that is pragmatically defined sets of people that do not constitute corporate polirical groups<sup>1</sup>, for their existence is undoubtedly related to the existence of what must be seen as, in the widest sense, political groupings. Yet, equally, can these groupings really be said to constitute ethnic 'groups' when they involve such a highly restricted section of the population both of the compound and of the 'Wiko', and where the boundaries of the ethnic group (if that is what it is) are so poorly defined?<sup>2</sup> Nor can I see these groupings that gather under the authority of the elders as being informal interest groups pursuing a greater share of the resources within the wider arena. Finally, I do not feel that it is adequate, or even possible, to make some sort of quantitative evaluation; to decide at what point on an heuristic continuum this particular form of ethnicity lies.

We have seen that these elders are informal leaders within small, highly integrated networks of face-to-face relationships. The manipulation of the term 'elder' takes

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<sup>1</sup> Grillo (1974:160); Cohen (1969:4)

<sup>2</sup> Grillo (1974:160) says that the concept of 'boundary' refers generally to the extent to which relations between those with different ethnic identities are restricted and formalized, and interaction is confined within the bounds of the ethnic group."

place as part of the competition for prestige and status within these restricted networks. Indeed, in the case of Liondo, the term is very definitely a resource in that competition. As such, the existence of elders is undoubtedly 'political' in the sense that it involves "processes involved in the distribution and exercise of, and the struggle for, power within a social unit".<sup>1</sup> But to what extent is it the politics of ethnicity in the sense of "strife between ... ethnic groups, in the course of which people stress their identity and exclusiveness"?<sup>2</sup>

It has to be remembered that the institution of Elder is not an aspect of 'Wiko' culture. It is a specifically colonial, urban institution which, I argued earlier, tended in some ways to reduce differences between tribes rather than exaggerate them within the colonial context. "Ethnic group boundaries consist of symbols",<sup>3</sup> but on Malota the existence of elders in 1971 was never specifically associated with the Wiko even within the compound. It was essentially something that was done by certain 'Malotans'. As we have seen, Samacongá himself constantly stressed the ethnic universality of elders on Malota. So, whatever the intention, the effect of having elders was not to provide a cultural symbol that excluded non-Wiko. The 'cases' presented showed that even the Lozi, the group whose dominance of the 'Wiko' is regarded

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen (1969:5)

<sup>2</sup> Cohen (1969:4)

<sup>3</sup> Schildkrout (1974:192)



as being basically responsible for the corporate feeling amongst these tribes in the urban situation, could become involved in the activities of the elders.

What then did the people in these groups have in common? The most noticeable factors were that the majority of the men involved were older, unskilled and self-employed, uneducated, and relatively long-term inhabitants of Malota who were unlikely to make any further inter- or intra-urban moves. Very few of them could be said to be financially successful, though some (Samacongga for instance) had obviously had periods in their careers when they had done very well for themselves. But this only served to exaggerate the fact that they were mostly reaching the end of their urban careers and that, economically, they were amongst the compound's less privileged. We have already seen how at the time of McCulloch's study (which, incidentally, took place seven years after Samacongga arrived on Malota) the Western group of tribes were substantially worse off than almost any other group in the town.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, they were by far the largest group on Malota forming nearly one-third of the population. Many of these people bought plots on the compound and, because of their low economic security, have remained on the compound. Despite the changes that have gone on in the country because of independence, these people have remained basically unchanged in socio-economic

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<sup>1</sup> In educational terms, for example, they were by far the worst off with 62% having no education at all. See McCulloch (1956:46)

terms. The new jobs that have been created have not been for them for they are too old to learn the skills. The higher levels of education are beyond them because they are too old (though their children and grand-children may well have been able to take advantage of them). Their present lives are dependent largely upon the pattern of their urban careers in the pre-independence era.<sup>1</sup>

The older 'Wiko' remain at the bottom of the urban socio-economic hierarchy, their position probably worse because they are older and find it harder to work, and because the number of people on the compound who are both educated and employed is much higher. Factors such as seniority and self-employment, which were important on pre-independence Malota, have become (as we saw in Chapter 6) less so in the last decade. No longer do age and length of time on the compound automatically provide some status in the competition for political office.

The choice of elders as the institutionalised form of leadership within this section of the population is a result of this increasingly low social and economic status. They have chosen a political institution from a previous era (one in which most of them were involved at the peak of their careers) largely because it is redundant in terms of Zambia's post-independence political

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<sup>1</sup> Though I do not have the actual statistics, it seems likely that the socio-economic status of the Western group of tribes has improved over the last two decades and that the younger 'Wiko' are much more able to compete economically and politically with other groups. Note for example the two young Wiko men who were UNIP officials on Malota.

structure. Because it is, the element of competition - always very great since the beginning of the nationalist movement - is nil, except within the networks involved.

The re-creation of the post of elder can therefore be seen as the result of the inability of certain individuals and their associates, who could well have attained political office in the pre-independence situation, to cope with the changes that have taken place in the urban political structure and the compound's social composition. If they wish to stay in town, and achieve the status they feel they deserve, then they must develop their own channels.

But this looks, on the surface at least, very much a case of what Cohen has called 're-tribalisation', that is a situation in which an "underprivileged status ... group will have to define its membership because it is only by organising itself tightly that it can struggle effectively with the other status groups".<sup>1</sup> But it seems to me that it is the status and not the ethnic element that we must retain as the significant factor. Undoubtedly, there is a partial coincidence between the 'underprivileged status group' and the Wiko and throughout the last two chapters we have constantly seen the close link between socio-economic status and ethnic groups. But I feel that to turn it into an ethnic phenomenon per se is to confuse the issue. Tribal Eldership does not provide the basis for the cultural differentiation of the Wiko

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen (1969:201-2)



nor, I believe, does it exclude non-Wiko of the same socio-economic grouping.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it is much more likely to exclude the younger, better educated, employed sector of the Wiko population. The partial coincidence of the ethnic group and the status group is a consequence of the historical factors leading to the inferior status of the Western tribes, and the great numerical dominance of the Wiko on Malota. But to turn it into a phenomenon of ethnicity is to miss the essential point that, as Rotberg points out at the national level, "'class' is the more determining variable in Zambian politics today, and that the 'tribal' split in the governing party is symptomatic rather than causal".<sup>2</sup>

#### 10:10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked briefly at certain aspects of two particular forms of political activity as they existed on Malota in 1971. Two themes emerged which relate to the central belief in the town that the compound is subject to strong rural influences and is outside the orthodox urban political arena. Of particular interest was the role of ethnic or tribal groups and the general idea that Malota's unusual social and physical structure has had a major impact on the nature of its political institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Samaconga, for example, obviously felt that other people in his situation, but from other tribes, could (and should) make similar claims to his.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Bates (1970:556)

It was seen that the dominance of political institutions by specific ethnic groups was an urban rather than a Malotan phenomenon. Malota tended to follow the general pattern in that political activity was broken up by divisions of a regional, rather than purely ethnic, nature with certain institutions being dominated by certain tribes or group of tribes. It would need the detailed study of further 'political' situations to make this anything more than a very general conclusion, but the data presented does appear to support Molteno's conclusion that during "the independence struggle the African nationalist movement did not reflect significant 'tribal' divisions, but conflict on sectional lines has increased sharply in the years since 1964."<sup>1</sup> However, it has also been strongly argued that this 'tribalism' must be understood as the result, and not the cause, of political conflict in Zambia.<sup>2</sup>

It is at the national level that these sectional differences are, inevitably, most obvious for their effect is concentrated and often traumatic. As we saw in the previous chapter, conflict within the ruling party, UNIP, has been centred in recent years on the Bemba and the Lozi, whereas the ANC emerged (until it was banned) as very much a party of the South. People in Zambia are only too aware of these conflicts as could be seen in 1971 by the widespread reaction to the Bemba in the months before

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<sup>1</sup> Molteno (1974:62)

<sup>2</sup> Rasmussen (1969:421)

the formation of Simon Kapepwe's breakaway United Progressive Party. Looking at the history of national politics in Zambia, it is apparent that the divisions are essentially regional and that they are subject to changes as different groups alter their allegiances in order to adapt to shifts in the balance of power. This arises, according to Bates, because "in Zambia, as elsewhere in Africa, region of origin correlates highly with tribal membership".<sup>1</sup> He goes on to argue that the study of urban areas has shown that region of origin has, in fact, 'supplanted' tribal membership as a criterion for the formation of ethnic groups. This phenomenon appeared in Livingstone in the tendency for all Northerners to be called 'Bemba'; for the Ngoni to be referred to (and to sometimes refer to themselves) as the 'Nyanja-speaking peoples'; and for the terms 'Luvale' and 'Wiko' to be used to designate a group of tribes from the West. As a result, there can be little doubt that "political activity and political leadership based predominantly on one regional area, coinciding to a certain extent (but never completely) with tribal units, are a fact in Zambia."<sup>2</sup>

But how does this affect, and how is it influenced by, political activity in Zambia's urban centres? What impact do these divisions at the national level have on what I have previously termed the 'local' factor? The two institutions that I studied on Malota showed this

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<sup>1</sup> Bates (1970:549)

<sup>2</sup> Pettman (1974:54)



regional dominance and by studying them closely I have tried to show what other factors are involved.

The first factor is historical. Colonial domination of a country is usually uneven and this frequently leads to the uneven development of facilities for the indigenous population. As a result, often for no other reason than historical accident,<sup>1</sup> the population of certain areas gain earlier and superior access to a variety of resources such as employment and education. This can bring about, as it has done in Zambia, a status hierarchy with a regional or tribal base. The formation of this hierarchy was, as we saw earlier, reflected in pre-independence African politics in Livingstone when three groups with high socio-economic status competed for the available political power. The original distribution of power was based on a second factor. This was the 'outsider' status of the Bemba and Ngoni in a town where the Lozi "passed for the elite".<sup>2</sup> This has undoubtedly affected subsequent political development in the town with the Lozi trying to regain the initial advantage that they handed to the other two when they themselves continued to concentrate on the Welfare Society during the early days of 'Congress'.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Western group of tribes were, in the pre-independence era, so

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<sup>1</sup> This 'historical accident' is, of course, frequently related to the physical distribution of resources and, in particular, minerals.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell (1974:321)

under-privileged in terms of social and economic resources that they were virtually excluded from competition in the formal political arena. Because of this low socio-economic status, they made up a very large proportion of the population of Malota and I have tried to show that this is a primary factor in the retention of 'tribal elders' on the compound, even seven years after independence. Independence brings about many changes in the distribution of power and resources, but there are certain sectors of the population which do not gain from these changes and who may, relative to the rest of the population, become even more disadvantaged. The older, uneducated, self-employed population of Malota are just such a group. If they had not lived (indeed, acquired a plot) on Malota, many of them would have been forced to return to their rural homes. As it is, the change in the compound's social composition, with the influx of younger, better educated, employed sub-tenants, means that their socio-economic status is even lower than it was.<sup>1</sup> Their retention of a redundant political category is a reflection of their perceptions of, and their experiences within, the formal political structure and, in particular, their role within it. I have argued that the existence of these elders should not be explained in terms of ethnicity but in terms of socio-economic status. This is not to deny the ethnic element,<sup>2</sup> but to

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<sup>1</sup> This is not only in relative terms. Their age and lack of skills means that, in absolute terms, they may be poorer than they used to be.

<sup>2</sup> This would, indeed, be tautologous as I have already argued that one of these bases of socio-economic differentiation is regionality.

insist that we do not lose the essential meaning of these activities by labelling them with a term such as 'retribalisation' which immediately places the phenomenon into a category which contains a wide range of disparate activities that have little connection.<sup>1</sup> The fact that 'Wiko' only are involved is due to the heavy numerical preponderance of this group in this particular stratum. This has come about as a result of action taken, and policies laid out, before independence. As such, the existence of elders does relate back to the pre-independence era, but it should not be explained in terms of 'conservatism', 'traditionalism' or 'tribalism', but in terms of those factors examined in the first half of this thesis - availability of housing, stabilisation policies, the employment/housing equation and so on. I cannot therefore see the existence of these elders as being the result of Malota's supposed marginality. It is, in a very real sense, a hangover from the colonial urban past.

Nor, finally, can I see Bemba/Ngoni dominance of UNIP as a peculiarity of Malota. Harries-Jones noted, though could not explain, an overrepresentation of Northern Province section officials.<sup>2</sup> The political structure of Livingstone, it would seem to me, only serves to make such

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<sup>1</sup> I am aware that this argument is very close to the basic framework that Cohen employs but it is interesting to note his comment that "sooner or later" we will have to drop the term ethnicity because it is "principally social and political, not sociological". (Cohen 1974:xxi). This is a case where the term would seem to confuse rather than enlighten.

<sup>2</sup> Harries-Jones (1969:334)



dominance more likely. The continuing minority, 'stranger' status of the Bemba and Ngoni; the attachment of the Lozi to UNIP and then ANC after their split with UNIP in the late 1960s; and the persistent affiliation of the town's other big tribal group, the Tonga, to the ANC serves to concentrate the resources of outsider groups on UNIP, at least until 1971. Though I have no statistical evidence for other housing areas, I would suggest that the state of UNIP on Malota was very much a reflection of the state of the party generally in the town at that time.

## CHAPTER 11

### CONCLUSION

Malota was considered by many people in Livingstone, including those who were responsible for its future, to be a separate community, virtually a village within the town. This idea is derived initially from the physical appearance and facilities of the compound which are so poor as to have caused it to be declared a "disaster area". In these terms Malota is undoubtedly a slum,<sup>1</sup> and is very similar in certain respects to other 'shantytowns' that have grown up around Zambia's towns and cities in recent years. The growth of squatter activity has accelerated rapidly in the post-independence era,<sup>2</sup> and the squatter settlement has become a standard feature of most towns. Indeed, it is argued by Van Velsen that: "It is ... inevitable that all towns should have unauthorized

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1 contains the text of a draft memorandum from Livingstone's Town Clerk to Simon Kapepwe (at the time the Vice-President) on the subject of Malota. Though it was exaggerated for political purposes, it shows many of the stereotyped views that were held in the town.

<sup>2</sup> Seymour (1976:2) shows that in Lusaka the squatter population grew from 18,000 in 1963, when it constituted 15% of the total population, to 166,000 in 1973 when it was 45% of the total.

settlements."<sup>1</sup> This inevitability is primarily attributed to the gap that exists between the rate of increase of the urban population and the supply of authorised housing. In addition, squatter settlements have certain economic advantages, for example in terms of rent, over other forms of low-cost housing. They offer opportunities for self-employment which official housing areas do not, and they permit a higher level of urban stabilisation. For these reasons they have become, in situations of rapid urban growth, a virtual necessity if the needs of the urban poor are to be catered for.

However, if the term 'squatter' is taken to relate primarily to the question of illegality of land tenure, Livingstone does not (with one minor exception) have any squatter settlements. Malota's status as a squatter settlement must therefore be attributed to other characteristics normally associated with squatter populations. Firstly, though the landlords have legal tenure, they often break other regulations relating to building, planning, and sanitation. Also sub-tenancy is unlawful and its existence is dependent upon the local authorities turning a 'blind-eye'. Finally, the businesses that are run from Malota's plots are technically illegal. Thus, there are illegal aspects to life on Malota which do not arise, and would not be tolerated, on most municipal housing areas but which are typical of many squatter settlements.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Velsen (1975:301)



Secondly, the stereotype of the Zambian squatter - involving "parasitism ('scrounging'), crime, prostitution, laziness and general unproductiveness; and, indeed, an abuse of and threat to Zambia's newly won Independence."<sup>1</sup> - is often applied to the population of Malota. Research shows that this stereotype does not provide an accurate reflection of reality, either for squatters or Malota. Both are believed to be socially homogeneous residential units, and their populations are regarded as outsiders to the city. At an extreme, they are (like unauthorised housing areas throughout the world) typified as "essentially rural enclaves socially and economically peripheral to the city."<sup>2</sup> Their populations are frequently classified as 'misfits', 'loafers', or 'outcasts', all terms which suggest that they are incapable of coping with urban life and have been excluded from the normal process by which individuals become urbanized. Once again, recent research, particularly in Latin America, suggests that the opposite is the case and that a squatter area "plays a functional role in the processes of social and economic adaptation and mobility of migrants new to the city."<sup>3</sup>

The conclusions of this study suggest that much the same can be said of Malota and that, rather than being a hinderance to the town, it is essential to the continued well-being of many people, and not just those who are

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<sup>1</sup> Van Velsen (1975:306)

<sup>2</sup> Brett (1974:177)

<sup>3</sup> Brett (1974:190)

living on the compound. For, although the physical facilities are obviously inadequate, the flexibility inherent in the compound's tenancy system provides options that allow certain groups of people, including an increasing number of individuals already employed in the town, to remain in Livingstone despite the inability of the local authorities to provide sufficient housing. It is in this sense that Malota is (and has been) different from, but important to, the rest of Livingstone.

Urban areas arise to serve a variety of purposes. They are complex units which must cater for a wide range of needs and goals. Inevitably, their administration tends to favour certain sectors of the population. Other sectors will find themselves with restricted access to a variety of resources such as employment opportunities, education and housing. But despite this, they may be crucial to the continuing functioning of certain aspects of urban life. For example, various services are required by an urban population which can best, or only, be provided by small-scale, self-employed workers. Such individuals, or groups of individuals, must be catered for and this requires a good deal of flexibility to be built into urban administration, particularly in the provision of housing. This is particularly so in situations of rapid change and growth. The existence of squatter settlements shows how the poorer sectors of the population can introduce this flexibility through their own actions, when it has not been provided by those who are in control. The development of Malota shows dramatically how, not only can they cope

with their inadequacies, but that they are capable of adapting to changing circumstances more quickly than the formal administration.

It was a stated assumption of this study that Malota's distinctiveness, if it existed at all, had to be demonstrated. It is a strong belief in the town that some sort of strong 'community spirit' exists on the compound. The 1971 Municipal Survey reported that many of the landlords "have lived long enough in Malota, so much so that a spirit of oneness has grown and now they feel they are part of the big family in Malota", and that even the subtenants, though they would not be so affected by the compound's demolition, would still "to some extent feel the result of the breaking of the big family".<sup>1</sup> These sort of images make it easier for outsiders and observers to see Malota as a separate community, and enhances the idea of its marginality. I have concluded that Malota first came to be seen as marginal because many of its population were excluded from participation in what the colonial authorities regarded as the urban sector i.e. those people involved in wage employment. Since municipal and employers' housing was mostly tied directly to wage employment, exclusion from the labour force meant virtual exclusion from authorised rented housing. This arrangement "was incompatible with permanent urbanization; tied housing was therefore less acceptable to the urbanized than to temporary

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<sup>1</sup> Municipal Council Survey (1971)



migrants."<sup>1</sup> This was the deliberate consequence of the colonial administration's wish to restrict the potential commitment of migrants to urban life. Faced with the contradiction of needing a large labour force but not wanting a large urbanized population, the administration sought to control the process of urbanization by excluding (or making it difficult for) certain categories such as women, unemployed migrants, or self-employed or retired workers. In tying housing to employment they hoped to make urban life sufficiently unstable that workers could not regard a town as their base. By starting from the assumption that there should be no urbanization, this policy was, by definition, unable to cope with many of the features associated with the urbanization process.

Those who were excluded by official policy sought accommodation on Malota, as did wage employees whose occupational instability made life in conventional rented housing hazardous. It has to be remembered that Malota was still an official housing area, and the possibility remains that the authorities used it in an indirect manner to cope with some of the problems they faced as a result of the inflexibility of their strict employment/housing equation. If this was so, it was never admitted and the effect was still that certain occupational categories, excluded from better housing areas and rented accommodation, came to be concentrated on Malota. The association of a number of other variables with occupation meant that the

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<sup>1</sup> Seymour (1976:62)

compound had a significantly different social composition in terms of factors such as age, sex, and ethnic origins. It was in these terms that there was a very distinct division between Malota and the other authorised housing in the town, and it was for this reason that the compound had come to be regarded as marginal in the pre-independence era. But I have argued that this distinctiveness was far from being a reflection of the compound's peripherality to the city. Quite the opposite, it shows the attempts of the population to avoid, or by-pass, those administration policies that sought to prevent urbanization. Malota's peculiar tenancy structure was manipulated by various categories of individuals in order to allow them to cope with the insecurities, both short-term and long-term, of urban life. It was they, and not the residents of the other authorised housing areas, who were better able to marry, to cope with unemployment, to envisage a long-term future (including possible retirement) in town. It was they who were better integrated into urban life and who would more easily remain in, and become committed to, town.

The decisions of certain individuals to live in a particular town or residential area are based on a whole series of factors. Such decisions are constrained by government policy, financial considerations, housing availability, familial obligations, and a variety of other influences relating to the needs and expectations of the individuals involved. Choice, and the actions based upon it, are a consequence of the way in which individuals perceive the available alternatives in terms of their own

individual and social needs. The individual must evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of specific situations. I have argued that colonial housing policy placed such severe constraints on the alternatives available to individuals that choice was, in fact, very limited. Thus the individuals living on Malota before independence frequently had no other options than a return to their rural homes or a further urban shift. My discussion of pre-independence Malota was therefore centred on a consideration of the factors that made these latter options less attractive than life on Malota, with all its disadvantages. My primary concern was with the way in which the individual's evaluation of the options was related to the point that he had reached in his urban and occupational careers, and how the compound's social composition should be seen as emergent from a set of individual choices and decisions subject to a variety of constraints.

The needs of certain sectors of the urban population that were met by Malota existed in all urban areas. They were, after all, part of the process of urbanization. As a result, despite the official strictness of government policy, a number of residential areas sprang up to cope with these needs. Broken Hill had a system of 'plots', and most towns had unauthorised housing areas.<sup>1</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup> These unauthorised areas often involved people settling on private land but with the owner's consent. As such they did not technically fit into the category of squatters. What squatting there was seems to have centred on these compounds [Seymour (1976:2)]. The Eccles Report of 1944 - quoted in Van Velsen (1975:298) - shows that, even as early as that, there was a good deal of confusion over the exact meaning of 'squatter'.



were subject to a fairly strict policy of containment and occasional demolition campaigns. Thus, even before independence, there was an accumulating demand for housing outside of the conventional rented sector. Independence removed a major series of constraints when a wide range of regulations relating to rural-urban influx and housing were withdrawn. On the other hand, a series of new constraints were to appear which would have an equally significant impact on choice and availability. The most important were focused upon the increase in the town's population as a result of changing expectations in the country as a whole. Though the administration saw the need to contain the upsurge in urban population, this came into conflict with the ideas and aims of the politicians who wanted to be able to show that they were going to keep their promises. As a result, squatting was positively encouraged by nationalist politicians. People flocked into the urban centres in order to be able to participate in the new standard of living that independence was supposed to bring about. Housing quickly became in short supply. Despite its obvious disadvantages, and age was rapidly exaggerating them, Malota became attractive as an option to certain individuals who would previously have had automatic access to other alternatives in the town because of the previous responsibility of employers for the housing needs of their employees. Now that this was no longer the case, those individuals employed by the larger firms, the local authority, or the Government, who could not obtain council housing had to move to Malota in order to retain

the urban base on which their jobs were dependent. Such people could be absorbed by the development of sub-tenancy with the result that there was an increasing heterogeneity in terms of occupation and other related variables. The advantages provided by the compound as a form of transitional or temporary accommodation were seen by many, particularly single, men as easily outweighing the physical disadvantages of living in a slum. Malota once again is in the position of providing an outlet for those who wish to remain in town but who, through no fault of their own and because of inadequacies in the administration of urban housing, are excluded from what is regarded by the authorities as conventional and 'normal' urban housing. Malota is only 'marginal' in terms of the definitions and assumptions of outsiders and observers. To the people who live on Malota, many of whom are now in the wage-earning sector, it is essential to their attempts to remain in Livingstone, to become integrated into the town, that Malota (or some equivalent) exist. It is in this positive sense that Malota is like many of Zambia's squatter settlements for it seems certain that, without it, a squatter compound (in the illegal tenure sense of that term) would have arisen in the town.

It cannot therefore be said that Malota has remained unaffected by the many changes of the last two decades. If it has become more overcrowded and more dirty, it is because of the demands made upon it as a result of the authorities being unable to respond quickly enough to these changes. In terms of its social composition, it has

in certain respects been more radically affected than any other housing area in the town. There is some continuity between the pre- and post-independence situations in the fact that, in both cases, the population of Malota was heavily dominated by individuals excluded from the main housing sector. However, the criterion used to exclude has altered substantially. Before, it was based on occupational factors; after, it was based on the availability of housing. The first is essentially ego-centred with the emphasis on the acquisition of education, skills, and employment by the individual. The second is primarily external to the individual. Consequently, Malota has increasingly become a bridgehead or temporary stop-gap for those individuals, frequently occupationally mobile, who wish (and intend) to stay in town, but who would prefer to live elsewhere. Inevitably, the long-term commitment of many of these people to Malota is low. They will remain there only until alternatives present themselves, and for this reason are likely to remain as sub-tenants. This is in contrast to the pre-independence situation when, if the authorities had provided extra housing, many of the inhabitants of Malota would have remained, indeed had to remain, on the compound.

In terms of its social composition, Malota - with its increased heterogeneity and internal differentiation - has become increasingly less distinct from the demographic pattern of the town as a whole. On the other hand, it has come to be regarded by people living in the town as more distinctive than it used to be. This distinctiveness is



frequently placed within a political framework.

Though, "sociologically, it is no longer very striking to assert that slums or squatter communities are not necessarily zones of social disorganization",<sup>1</sup> there are many people who continue to believe otherwise. The existence of the Jehovah's Witness church and tribal elders on Malota, together with the belief that the banned ANC had its headquarters there, was used as evidence to support this idea. More generally, it was felt that the inhabitants of Malota were substantially more conservative and traditional than elsewhere in the town. For these reasons, it was said that the compound was the focus for opposition to the government.<sup>2</sup> This appears to be an extension into the political arena of the belief that slums and squatter settlements constitute a 'threat'.<sup>3</sup> It is based on a number of factors. Once again, physical appearance should not be underestimated. If the compound

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<sup>1</sup> Ross (1973:299)

<sup>2</sup> The strength, and inaccuracy, of this idea is shown in the following example. I was told, by a number of people of very different backgrounds, that the 'real' political leader on Malota was a certain Mr. Chipango. This man did not, in fact, live on Malota but was a noted opponent of the government and his movements in 1971 were highly restricted by the police. A one-time Mayor of Livingstone, he was subsequently arrested in early 1973 as being an 'agent of the South' [Pettman (1974:242)]. He was later sentenced to death for high treason after recruiting people for military training in Namibia preparatory to organising a coup (Africa Diary; xvi,32; August 5-11, 1976). His political connections with Malota were virtually nil but his local notoriety as the symbol of opposition meant that it was often thought that his activities were centred on Malota.

<sup>3</sup> Van Velsen (1975:306)

looks like a village, it becomes very easy for outsiders to assume that the population behave like 'villagers'. The assumption of many urban-dwellers, once again inaccurate, is that this involves the retention of the traditional rural values that prevent the speedy emergence of a modern Zambia. The historical fact, well known throughout Livingstone, that Malota was always the centre for the town's Tribal Elders (even after they had been officially discontinued) has led people to think that 'tribal' values have had an unacceptably important impact on the compound's political activity. The study of two particular political institutions on Malota - 'tribal elders' and UNIP section leadership - has shown that ethnic divisions are indeed apparent. But I have attempted to show that these divisions cannot be attributed to 'conservatism' or 'tribalism' as such. Instead they should be seen as the consequence of a series of factors relating to the distribution of resources in the urban sector.

The emergence of African political institutions in the pre-independence era was closely related to government policy on urbanization. The official policy demanded that the commitment of migrants to urban life was to be avoided. Initially, therefore, it was hoped that political institutions could be developed that would stress the rural nature of the urban migrant's background. But, as with housing needs, the colonial administration was trying to ignore, or at least delay, the inevitable. As towns grew, demands by the African population for effective representation were bound to emerge. Urban life gave rise to new problems that could not be solved through rural-

based institutions. In particular, the tribal elder was designed to represent the African vis-a-vis other Africans and could be of no use in counteracting the racial inequalities which were such a dominant feature of the urban market place, particularly in relation to labour. For this purpose, many Africans felt that they should have appropriate institutions through which their protests could be channelled. Their demands were intensified by the development of an urban elite based on industrial skills and education which believed that there should be specifically urban institutions that would provide some sort of political equality with whites. The urban situation concentrated and intensified the political needs and demands of Africans. However, the concessions that were allowed by the colonial administration did not take account of (or maybe just refused to acknowledge) the nature of these needs. As in other matters, the desire of the administration to prevent any urbanization of a permanent nature meant that it did not realise what was actually happening in Northern Rhodesia's towns.

The political institutions (particularly the welfare societies, political parties and Trade Unions) that did eventually emerge soon began to reflect the urban context within which they developed. Though it is generally argued that internal conflict between Africans was muted in the pre-independence era, it is apparent that the leadership of the various institutions was unequally distributed in terms of various factors, particularly ethnic origin and economic status. The ability of individuals to



take office was increasingly "derived from their education and conscious approximation to European standards."<sup>1</sup> These criteria were essentially urban and were in stark contrast to the factors that had been used to elect tribal elders (particularly seniority and knowledge of rural values). The development of urban areas brought about a new framework by which people's status could be assessed, and political participation came to be closely related to this hierarchy. Skills, education, wage employment, and Western attitudes became resources in the competition for leadership in the new institutions. Those people without these resources were, on the whole, excluded from office. As a result, many continued to support the elders, whose status was based on resources which they did have access to. We have seen how, for a number of reasons, such people were concentrated on Malota, and it is for this reason that elders continued to be centred on the compound. The cause of this was not, therefore, an innate conservatism or tendency to tribalism, but the fact that the compound had a particular social composition. But, as we have already seen, this social

seen, this social composition was a true reflection of competition paralleled other urban demographic patterns in the country more closely than any

area in the town. Those categories which did not have the resources for political office (other than elder) were approximately the same categories which were excluded from conventional municipal housing. But they were still an integral part of urban life. Their exclusion came not from

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:233)

their peripherality, or from the fact that they were of no use in the urban situation. It was a result of the fact that they did not have these resources which, as the <sup>town</sup> level of urbanization increased, had become increasingly significant. -----

We have seen how in Livingstone different institutions initially came to be dominated by particular ethnic groups, and how this has provided a basic framework around which subsequent developments in political activity have taken place. Simultaneously, socio-economic differentiations that had arisen within the urban situation were seen to have had a significant impact on the way in which political office was distributed. As a result, researchers such as Mitchell and Epstein were able to conclude that, with the continuing growth and development of towns, tribalism was no longer the only category of interaction and noted "the increasing significance of prestige or 'class' as a further category of social interaction in African urban life."<sup>1</sup> Such an approach tends to dichotomise 'class' and ethnicity, viewing them in an 'either/or' type of relationship, and assuming that they are basically contradictory. It fails to shed light on the complex interrelationship that exists between the two factors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Epstein (1958:240). As Little points out, (1974: 47) this view of 'class' did not involve the existence of "corporately acting groups".

<sup>2</sup> However, the very last sentence of Epstein's book does note that the interplay between the two factors poses "important problems for further research in the field of African urbanism".

It is too simple to argue that 'class' outweighs tribe in the political arena; or to argue that ethnicity is only a consequence of socio-economic differentiation. In the former we still have to explain why, statistically speaking, certain ethnic groups become dominant. In the latter we must take into account the effect that a widespread belief in the overwhelming influence of ethnicity has on political activity, for it may provide very strong ideological support for the persistence of the socio-economic differentiations on which it is based. For example, Bemba dominance may emerge as a result of socio-economic factors, but, once it has done so, its existence becomes a further resource in the competition for power. Thus it seems more appropriate to see socio-economic status as an intervening variable between tribe and political participation.<sup>1</sup> In this way the relationship between political leadership and ethnic origin becomes an indirect one, for both are directly related to the same factor - socio-economic status.

The issue was complicated with the arrival of independence. Though towns and cities grew rapidly, and the process of urbanization appeared to accelerate with the removal of colonial restrictions, the existence of ethnic cleavages appeared to be even more obvious. The process by which ethnic relations in the urban situation were supposed to become increasingly less important appeared to have been reversed. Predictably, in view of

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<sup>1</sup> Bates (1970:555)



the stated goals of this new independent Zambia, the exaggerated emergence of 'tribalism' was assumed to be associated with the conservatism and traditionalism of certain sectors of the population. Yet the data presented in this study strongly suggests that the divisions are, once again, related to socio-economic distinctions that have arisen in the urban situation. Demographically, this ethnic dominance undoubtedly appears but the relationship is an indirect one which must be seen in terms of an intervening variable. As a result, it is apparent that "tribe, in itself, does not make a significant difference. Rather it is tribal membership, in conjunction with other variables, which is important."<sup>1</sup>

Why then has so much emphasis been placed on 'tribalism' since Zambia's independence? It is difficult to say, but the most likely factor appears to be that ethnic divisions are easily (and universally) observable. Categories such as 'worker' which can be used to express socio-economic divisions are hard to apply in the African situation which is, comparatively speaking, only semi-industrialised, and where the wage-employment sector is only one part of the urban economy. Ethnic origin, on the other hand, is virtually a universal attribute. Socio-economic status in the urban situation is not clearly defined and the "structure of 'the stratification system is extremely amorphous'".<sup>2</sup> The divisions are often expressed

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<sup>1</sup> Bates (1970:549)

<sup>2</sup> Schwab quoted in Little (1974:47)

in terms of highly complex combinations of social and economic factors. Political expression, on the other hand, normally needs to be built upon simple categories and, given the lack of alternatives (particularly now that racial distinctions have almost been eliminated) and the approximate coincidence between tribal membership and socio-economic status, the use of ethnic terminology to express the divisions within the political structure is not particularly surprising. The fact that the coincidence is only approximate is probably responsible for these ethnic divisions being increasingly framed in terms of regional categories, or 'alliances of region'.

As Zambian towns have emerged from nothing, they have become ethnically heterogeneous to an extent that never occurred in the pre-urban, pre-colonial era. At the same time the capitalist system within which these towns have developed has led to a series of differentiations based on various social and economic factors. These two sets of factors by which the urban population can be differentiated are, and have been, intricately related. In the competition for the resources available in the urban situation, which is reflected in the variety of political institutions that have emerged over the years, it is inevitable that these two factors should be crucial. The tentative conclusion here is that despite the apparent changes in the impact of tribalism, socio-economic status continues to be the determining variable.

We have seen that many of the ideas that people have about Malota cannot be substantiated. It is not a squatter compound; its population is not primarily composed of misfits and outcasts; it is not unchanging or politically conservative. In most cases the reverse is true. Though we should avoid making the conclusion that Malota is a desirable place to live, it is apparent that over the years it has played a crucial role in the development of Livingstone and has been a very important factor in the lives of many thousands of migrants. As the town has grown, the compound has provided that flexibility which has been needed to cope with many of the problems associated with rapid urbanization. Not only has Malota been able to cater for needs not dealt with elsewhere in the town, but it has allowed quick adaptations to changes that have occurred at the national level, which the administration has been unable, or unwilling, to cope with. The rise of squatter compounds represents the informal reaction of the populace to changes which the authorities cannot (or choose not to) deal with. Malota is, in effect, an official alternative to squatting. In order for it to exist many rules must be broken and the administration must constantly turn a blind-eye to certain activities. But the tenure is legal, a certain element of official control remains, and the council continues to collect rents. Meanwhile, the compound provides a legal (and relatively secure) means by which the migrants who have flooded into the town can cope with the problems they encounter in Livingstone. A reflection of just how



important the compound is can be found in the fact that it was estimated in 1971 that it would cost K4 million to resettle the population in new housing. The enormous cost, together with the technical problems involved, eventually caused the administration to decide in 1973 to retain the compound as it was, with an upgrading of the available facilities. Once again, as has happened so often over the years, Malota has avoided demolition. Needless to say, the compound will continue to be surrounded with a variety of myths about its population because the fact that it is so crucial only serves to highlight, in a most dramatic manner, the inability of the administration at the local and national levels to cope with rapid urban change.

APPENDIX 1

Livingstone Town Clerk's Office: Draft Memorandum 10/5/1970.

To; His Honour, The Vice-President of Zambia.

The Council has been concerned for some time at the growth of Malota compound, which is an area very close to the centre of Livingstone. Due to the size of the problem which has to be solved a great deal of time has been wasted, for, on the one hand, the Council has wanted to act, and on the other has lacked the resources. But Malota continues to grow and the Council have now realised that even though this problem is too big to tackle now, and has been too big for some time now, it is going to be an even bigger problem if weeks, months, and years continue to slip by.

Therefore at their specially convened meeting on 9/5/1970, attended also by the Minister for Rural Development, Minister of State, Cabinet Minister for Southern Province, District Governor, Council Education Officer and Provincial Medical Officer the following resolution was passed:

"That a petition be presented to His Honour the Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia, S. Kapepwe, Minister of Provincial and Local Government, requesting, in the most urgent possible terms that in order to deal effectively and quickly into the Malota Compound, (sic) in which area thousands of persons are living in terrible heart breaking conditions, the area be declared a 'disaster area' and that as a consequence the Government make available all resources, financial or otherwise, to deal with the area in the manner in which disaster areas are usually dealt with, in view of the inadequate resources the Livingstone Council have to tackle this problem, and further that his Worship the Mayor, the Minister of Rural Development

and the Town Clerk be authorised to present the Council's case for this request to his Honour the Vice-President."

Your Honour, it has already been mentioned that the problem of Malota has occupied the Council's mind for some considerable time. At almost every meeting of the Project Management Team, which meets regularly at the District Governor's office, ways and means of dealing with Malota have been discussed. No really practical and yet quick solutions have been found. The short term solutions are impractical e.g. lack of resources. The practical solutions are too slow e.g. gradual demolition.

Your Honour visited Malota on his tour of Livingstone in early March this year, we feel confident that in view of what you saw you would never suggest a long term solution to this problem. The heart breaking sight of houses crowded so close together, of lack of privacy, of lack of the basic facilities which enable a person to live with some human dignity, the sight of these things demands urgent, immediate action. It needs no psychiatrist to tell us the effect living in these conditions will produce on the residents, in the child who is set on the road to crime and delinquency through poverty and sub-standard living; the adolescent who turns to crime and prostitution as a means of obtaining a pleasant living to escape these conditions; the adult who loses faith in himself and his country through his degradation, the old person who almost awaits death as a friend, as a release from this pitiable existence. Each and everyone of these residents suffers each and every day, every minute of every



hour, the misery of his environment, which he cannot help, or from which there appears to be no escape. We say "each and every one" but how many are there? The dreadful situation is that one knows not how many. Figures ranging from 6,000-10,000 have been mentioned and a figure of 4,000 children. Every unit in these figures represents a person in despair. Every unit represents a person depending upon the Council or the Government to take some action to release their misery. It is so easy to mention 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 9,000. It is so simple to see figures and numbers as figures and numbers instead of seeing the individual people they represent. Imagine Your Honour just the 4,000 children we have mentioned, 4,000 young lives being stunted and destroyed before their characters, abilities and talents have had a chance to bloom. A 'crop' of the most valuable of Zambia's assets - its young people - destroyed just as certainly as the crops in the field are destroyed by the locusts.

Your Honour the conditions in Malota are indescribable. Non-existent roads; open sewers, and refuse and garbage everywhere; plots designed for one house having seven or eight on them; flies and dirt all around. In short a scene repugnant to everyone who respects the rights of every person to a decent standard of living, and the right of every man to live in some semblance of dignity. But Your Honour we have not stressed the physical situation, appalling as it is. We have rather, as humanists should do, tried to draw a picture briefly, yet accurately, factually but not emotionally, though

emotions are roused, of the conditions in Malota and we hope that you will be able to see your way to giving to those people the solution, urgently needed and which can only be provided by declaring this area a 'disaster area'.

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